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GOING HOME TO HEAVEN.

BY LOUISE MALCOM STENTON.

Ah! dying is but going home—
Home, to loved ones waiting there—
Where nevermore are tears, or parting,
But smiling skies are ever fair.

Where weary limbs may rest forever,
Safe from dreary paths on earth—
From blinding sleet and bitter cold—
Where life eternal has new birth.

As a babe in fear, or anguish,
Flies him to his mother's arms,
Let me, Saviour, ere I perish,
Near thee rest from Life's alarms.

I am lost indeed without Thee
To guide my stumbling feet aright;
Let Thy wings fold warm about me,
Lest I perish in the night!

Shadowed by Fate.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NULL AND VOID," "MADAM'S WARD," "THE HOUSE IN THE CLOSE," "WHITE BERRIES AND RED," "ONLY ONE LOVE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

IRIS rode back slowly to the Revels thinking over the adventure which had befallen her, the still stranger words the young man had spoken of her father.

Why had she refused to tell him her name, and let him tell his? She wished now that she knew it. They had parted strangers; if they met again—but perhaps they would never meet again.

The world was wide, and her life would be spent within the circle of Knighton and Beverley, and it was very probable that he would never come back, that she should see him no more!

Meanwhile Lord Montacute had reached the Revels. He had said on the spur of the moment that he was going to see Mr. Knighton; but now that he stood in the library he had not the least notion what he had come for.

And when the door opened and the squire came in, and extending his hand, said, "Good morning, Montacute," the young earl stammered, and blushed, and fingered his eyeglasses helplessly.

The fact was, Clarence was not only madly in love with Iris, but he was very much afraid of her father: most people were, without exactly knowing why.

Godfrey Knighton's manner was stern, and the dark eyes under their heavy brows seemed to go through the ordinary individual like gimlets; the air of reserved melancholy and pre-occupation also added to the general sense of awe and mystery.

As he sat down in his chair, and looked across at the young man with the look that was not intended to be a frown, but was awkwardly like one, poor Clarence's small stock of self-possession melted into thin air.

"Have you ridden over?" said the squire, opening the conversation.

"Ye—es; I wode over. Beautiful morning for a wide, Mr. Knighton."

"Yes," said the squire. "Iris has taken advantage it of and rode over to the Holt."

A sudden inspiration seized the young earl. He would take the hedge at a rush. Why shouldn't he?

"Mr. Knighton," he commenced, turning pale and then red again, "I—I came over to speak to you about Iris—that is, Miss Knighton."

"About Iris—my daughter?" said the squire, in a tone of surprise which discomposed Clarence terribly.

"Ye—es. The fact is, sir, that I—love Miss Knighton."

There was a moment's silence; then the squire's face grew darker, the frown heavier.

"Have you spoken to her?" he asked, and his voice was troubled and stern, almost like that of a judge questioning a prisoner.

"No, sir," replied Clarence nervously, "I have not! I have thought of doing so,—have tried to do so,—but——"

"I am glad you have not," said Godfrey Knighton in a deep grave voice.

The young man looked down at the carpet, anxious but too modest to be amazed at the reception that was accorded to him. Why should Mr. Knighton receive his proposal so coldly and regard him with such a stern, forbidding countenance?

The Knightons were the Knightons of the Revels, of ancient lineage and great social standing. It was true, but he was an earl, and his mother's side was descended from one of the Conqueror's companions. He was young, possessed of a good rent-roll, and of good character; why then should Mr. Knighton receive him as if he were somebody altogether objectionable?

"I hope I have not offended you, Mr. Knighton?" he said at last timidly.

The squire started as if his thoughts had been wandering right away from the subject and a red flush mounted to his brow.

"No, no; certainly not!" he answered quickly, but still sternly. "You must know that in proposing for Iris's hand you are doing me a great honor, Montacute."

"No, sir, the honor is all on your side!" said Clarence, and he said it very nicely.

Mr. Knighton shook his head.

"It is a great honour, Montacute," he repeated, "and I am sensible of it; but—" he stopped, rising from his chair, began to pace the room, the look of trouble, and doubt, and indecision growing more distinct upon his face. "Your proposal takes me by surprise," he went on. "I had no idea that you entertained such thoughts of Iris. She—she is so young."

"My mother was married before her age, sir," said Clarence.

"Times have altered, Montacute," he said. "Girls are girls still until they are beyond Iris's age. And you have not spoken to her? Have you any reason to hope——?" he paused, and regarded the young man with the keen glance that seemed to go through him.

Clarence shook his head rather dolefully.

"No," he replied, with a sigh. "Miss Knighton is always kind to me—but, then, so she is to everyone," and he stopped.

"She is young, young," said Mr. Knighton. "Montacute, I don't know what to say. If it were anyone else I would say 'No' at once. But you—you are an old friend. Montacute, it is a strange question I am going to ask you——"

"You can ask me what you like, sir," said Clarence.

Mr. Knighton took a turn or two, then stopped and regarded him closely.

"Montacute, I don't doubt your sincerity for a moment. I believe that you think you love Iris; but I wanted to ask you this. You have seen her at her best, surrounded by luxury, in a home which has been as a most favorable setting for her. Supposing that you had met her under different circumstances, supposing she had been one of the girls from the factory at Beverley, a poor girl of humble birth——" he stopped and frowned, and seemed for a moment lost in thought; then went on, "Montacute, are you sure it is herself, and not Iris Knighton, the heiress of the Revels, whom you wish to marry?"

Clarence Montacute crimsoned.

"It—it isn't necessary that I should marry an heiress, sir," he said, with quiet dignity.

The squire shook his head.

"You misunderstand me, Montacute," he said, with a sigh. "And I had scarcely hoped to make myself understood. No, I did not mean to infer that you were marrying her because she would be mistress of the Revels when I am gone—far from that. I meant——" he stopped again, and, sinking into his chair, covered his eyes with his hands. "I don't think I can speak more plainly," he said at last, as if something were weighing heavily upon his spirits; then he looked up, and added quickly, "Don't misunderstand me in another way, Montacute; Iris will be the mistress here, and I am, as you know, what the world considers a rich man. It would be a suitable match: and yet—" he paused, and then looked at the young man with a steady frown,—"and yet I cannot give you my consent."

Clarence's face fell. His hopes had been growing at each moment, and the conclusion fell upon him like a thunderbolt.

"You—you forbid me to speak to Iris—Miss Knighton, sir?" he faltered.

"Forbid is too harsh a word, Montacute," said the squire. "No, no; I don't forbid, but I ask you most earnestly not to do so at present. Let us wait. Heaven knows there is plenty of time. Iris is only a girl as yet: and you—you are young enough to change your mind——"

"I shall not change my mind if I live to be as old as Methuselah," said Clarence, flushing and almost forgetting to lisp. "I love Iris with all my heart, sir, and I shall go on loving her. You—she—couldn't prevent that. As to loving her because she is Miss Knighton of the Revels, that doesn't count with me. I would marry her if she were without a penny and was a plain Miss Smith!"

The squire looked at him steadily.

"Montacute," he said, "you are a good fellow. If you knew what it cost me to say 'wait,' you would sympathise with me. But you don't know, you do not understand, and—" he paused as if irresolute, and the frown deepened—"No! I cannot tell you! All I can say is 'wait for awhile.' Indeed," he added quickly, "in any case I should say that. Iris is—rather a peculiar girl. It is as likely as not if you were to speak to her that she would say 'no,' and that would be worse for you than my 'wait,' for Iris is not a girl to change her mind."

Clarence turned his hat round and looked hard at the maker's name in the crown. It was a heavy blow to him, and he felt half stunned

"And—and while I'm waiting," he said, "perhaps some one may come——"

The squire interrupted him quickly and steadily.

"If it is any consolation to you," he said, "I will tell you that what I have said to you I should say to any who came to me and asked me for Iris, be he whom he may!"

Clarence rose and sighed.

"Well, sir, I suppose I must be content with that," he said. "I—I think I'll go now."

The squire held out his hand.

"Montacute," he said, "the time may come—will come—when you will know and acknowledge that I have acted rightly. I can say no more—even to you! I won't ask you to stay; it is better that you should not!"

"I—I suppose I may come here as usual?" said poor Clarence dolefully.

"Certainly! Why not?" assented Mr. Knighton. "Because I do not accept you on the spot as a suitor for Iris, is no reason why we should lose a friend! Montacute, I will say this, that if I had to choose a husband for my daughter I should choose you before anyone else."

The young man's face brightened.

"Thank you, sir," he said. "I'll do exactly as you say. I'll wait—and hope," and he got outside.

The squire did not accompany him to the hall door as he usually did, but sank into the chair, and, shading his eyes with his hand, seemed lost in thought; and though he was by no means an old man, he looked, as he sat there, as if he were broken down by premature old age.

He may have sat there for an hour without moving, when the door opened and Iris came in.

He looked up as her light step fell upon his ear, and, used as he was to her presence, her extreme beauty seemed to strike him with greater force than it had ever done before; something else seemed also to strike him. There was a different look upon her face to any he had seen there: a certain vague shyness and confusion utterly novel to her.

"Father," she said in her musical voice, "is anything the matter?"

"No, no!" he said. "You have been for your ride?"

"Yes," she said, and a faint color stole into her face, and her eyes fell.

She had never concealed anything from him; she would tell him about her adventure, though she felt a strange reluctance to do so.

"Yes, and I met——"

"Lord Montacute; I know," he said. "He has been here."

She stopped; there was an expression in his face she did not understand.

"Yes, he told me he was coming," she said, with a smile, as she recalled his nervous manner and slurred "r's."

"Did he tell you—no! Did you guess why he was coming, Iris?"

She shook her head carelessly, and, taking off her hat, pushed back a few tendrils of the soft, black hair.

"No! To ask you about the ball, I suppose?" she said, with a smile.

"No," said the squire, still eying her nervously. "He came to speak about you, Iris."

"About me?" she said, with her pensive smile. "Really! What could he have to say about me?"

"Iris, he wants you to be his wife," he said, after a pause.

Her cheeks flushed slightly, then her brows contracted, with a faint copy of his own frown. "And what did you say, father?"

"What should I have said, Iris?" he replied.

She looked at him for a moment, then went to the window, and looking out, dropped one word from her lips:

"No!"

Godfrey Knighton drew a breath of relief.

"Are you sure?" he said.

"Am I sure?" she echoed, still with her face turned from him. "Yes, I am quite sure!"

"Think!" he said. "He is a peer; of good birth on his mother's side; he is rich, honest, young!"

"Please!" she murmured. "He is all you say, father, and more, and I like him very much; but I do not want to marry him. I do not want to marry anyone," she added quickly.

The squire's face cleared, and grew as cheerful as it was possible for it to grow.

"You are right, Iris," he said. "It was what I told Montacute! You are young—too young! There is plenty of time, is there not?"

"Ages! Centuries!" she murmured.

He rose, and going to her, put his arm round her, and kissed her brow, still with the same air of relief.

"You are a good girl, Iris," he said slowly and gravely. "You have said just what I wished. Lord Montacute is a capital fellow, every way desirable, and if I wanted

a husband for you I couldn't choose a better, but," he added quickly, the frown returning, "I do not. I said to him, wait—"

She looked round quickly.

"Why should you have said that, father? It would be of no use his waiting; no use!"

He looked at her with a swift anxiety.

"Why do you speak so certainly? There is no one else, Iris?"

As he spoke, there rose all unbidden the vision of the young man kneeling beside the stream,—all unbidden and all unwelcome. With a flush of annoyance that she should think of him at that moment, she answered quickly—

"No; no one else! Whom should there be, father?"

He sighed and nodded.

"Whom, indeed!" he said. "Then that is all right. You have removed a weight from my mind, Iris; a weight that has been crushing it——" he stopped suddenly, as if regretting what he had said, and moved to the table. "Go, now, dear, I have some letters to write."

She went and touched his forehead with her lips as he had touched hers, and left the room.

Her own apartments were in the south wing, and consisted of boudoir, dressing room and bed room. Godfrey Knighton's habits and wants were as simple as the late Duke of Wellington's, and his own rooms almost as barely furnished as were those of the Iron Warrior's; but for Iris nothing could be too good. The boudoir was a marvel of luxury and taste. The walls were lined with fluted satin of a dark maroon, upon which the few pictures, gems of water colors, rested like gems indeed. A semi-grand Broadwood stood in an angle of the wall, and some choice exotics upon one of the tables. There was a Chippendale bookcase with some standard works in fine bindings, and an easel upon which stood a half-finished head.

Beside a small table sat a woman of middle age, and of that peculiar swarthiness which proclaims the peasant of the south. Her name was Felice, and she had come over from Italy with Mr. Knighton and his daughter.

She was a strange woman, and, unlike most of her countrywomen, remarkably quiet and reserved. On Iris she bestowed a devotion and passionate love of which it is said only an Italian peasant is capable. She had been a member of the household so long, and in such an intimate connection with the young mistress of the Revels, that she was considered as something superior to the other servants, and spent most of her time in Iris's rooms, to which her own bedroom adjoined.

She looked up quickly as Iris entered, and her dark eyes seemed to run all over her like a flash of lightning, then hid themselves behind lashes almost as long and quite as dark as Iris's own.

"Well, Felice," she said, dropping into a chair, "still at work? Why don't you go out this lovely day?"

The woman shrugged her shoulders.

"I am happy enough indoors, signorina," she said in a musical Tuscan tone. "I am never so happy as when I am at work for the signorina. Are you tired?" she said suddenly, fixing her eyes on Iris's face.

Iris started, and laughed softly.

"Not in the least. I was only thinking, Felice," she said. "I'll take off my habit now, please," and she stood up.

Felice, with skilful hands that seemed scarcely to touch her, so deftly they worked, slipped off the habit.

As she did so she touched the rent with her fingers.

"The signorina has torn her habit."

"Yes," said Iris, looking at the slit in the skirt pensively.

"Been jumping again?" said Felice in an accent almost of reproach.

Iris laughed.

"No, I have not," said Felice. Didn't I promise my father and you that I wouldn't jump when I was alone, and do you think I don't keep my promises?"

"How did you do it, then?" asked the woman, fingering the rent with the tips of her fingers, and glancing from it to the beautiful girl, who stood looking out of the window abstractedly. It was not caught in a gate? No! There is no mud—signorina has not fallen, Soh! How did it come there?"

"You would never guess if you tried for a month, Felice," said Iris, a soft smile creeping over lips, "and as I don't mean to tell anything, you need not ask any more questions."

The woman did not express the slightest sign of impatience either by word or look, but calmly laid the habit aside, and went on with the mistress's toilet as if the incident had not occurred.

In a noiseless fashion that was not without its peculiar grace, she brushed the long dark hair, and bound it up in a coil, and wrapped her mistress in a long tea-gown of rose silk and lace.

Iris sat back in her chair, her eyes downcast, a pensive look in her face, softened by a half smile.

She was going over every word that had passed between her and the young fellow of the "bull-fight;" recalling almost unconsciously his every look and attitude. How she had deceived him about Miss Knighton about herself!

Would he make inquiries and find out his mistake? she wondered, and if so, what would be his opinion of her?

Suddenly she looked up, and saw the dark eyes of Felice fixed upon her in the glass. They were lowered instantly, but the look drew Iris's thoughts from the young man to herself.

"Felice?"

"Miss Iris," she said, addressing her in the English fashion, as she always did when she remembered to do so.

"How long have you been with us?—a long while, isn't it?"

The woman's face suddenly grew as immobile as one of the statues in her own Rome.

"A long while?—yes."

"Ever since I was a baby?" said Iris, thoughtfully.

"Ever since the signorina was a baby," assented Felice, as calmly as a statue would have spoken.

"I was born in Italy, wasn't I?"

"Of a certainty, yes."

"Do you remember—my mother?" said Iris, her voice growing low and sad.

There was an instant pause,—it was scarcely hesitation before the woman replied.

"No, Miss Iris; the signorina died before I came as Miss Iris's nurse.

Iris drew a long sigh.

"How I wish I could remember her!" she said, more to herself than to the woman. "It is so strange, so sad not to have known her, even ever so little! Felice, you saw her? You knew her?"

"Yes," replied the woman. "I saw the signorina once."

"What was she like?—tell me?" said Iris quickly, eagerly.

"She was beautiful as—— If the signorina will look in the glass, she will see how beautiful!" said Felice.

Iris sighed; the compliment had not raised a blush, for she was used to Felice's outspoken admiration.

"And that is all you know of her?" she said. "I ask you, Felice, because my father——" she paused—"my father has never told me, and I do not like to ask him, or speak of her to him."

"It is wise," said Felice, quietly but promptly. "Mr. Knighton does not like to recall what he has lost! It would only wound him to speak of the dead signorina. The signorina is quite right not to speak her name to him.

"And I am half Italian?" said Iris musingly. "How strange! And I feel so thoroughly English! Am I not quite English, Felice? Can Italian women ride and drive and swim and row as I can?" Am I not quite different in every way to them? Tell me."

"Miss Iris is quite different—almost!" came the answer.

Iris laughed softly.

"You have spoilt it, Felice," she said. "Your love of truth is greater than your desire to please me. 'Quite different—all most!' That means I am more Italian than I think."

"The signorina has the beauty of the south; she has the Italian eyes, the Italian voice, but she has the English heart," said the woman; "and she is the daughter of a great English gentleman."

She paused for a moment to see if Iris would speak again, and then slowly glided from the room.

Iris sat beside the window some time, then she got up and went to the easel.

For a few minutes she worked at the crayon sketch, then dropping the charcoal, with a little grimace seated herself at the piano and began to sing.

But just as the young man's face had come between her and the sketch, so his voice seemed to mingle with the air she was singing, and with a gesture of impatience, and a flush of annoyance on her face, she rose and shut the piano.

CHAPTER IV.

THE day wore on, the candles were alight in the drawing room, and Godfrey Knighton sat with a book in his hand, waiting for the dinner-bell.

Iris usually came down half-an-hour before it rang, and the squire looked at the door now and again, for to-night she was late. But presently she came in, and his face cleared somewhat as his eyes rested upon her with a glow of pride and admiration in them.

No wonder that Lord Montacute wanted to marry her! No wonder that half the men in the county were at her feet! Then he sighed, and, laying down the book, regarded her with the old sad, half-stern expression.

"You haven't told me about your ride this morning, Iris," he said. She was standing, fastening a bracelet which had escaped Felice's keen eyes, and her lashes quivered a little. "Did you go far?"

"No; I was going to the Holt, but I did not get so far as that," she said: and once again resolved to tell him all; she opened her lips, but at that moment there was the sound of carriage wheels on the drive, and the squire, whose ears were quick, looked up.

"What can that be?" he said.

"I don't know. Are you expecting any one?" she asked.

"No," he replied, still listening.

"Perhaps it is one of the tradesmen's carts," she said, with a smile; "if so, I don't envy them the scolding they will get from Horrocks, the gardener."

As she spoke the door opened, and a footman entered. He looked rather confused and reluctant, and said hesitatingly,

"A gentleman, sir——"

"Permit me to announce myself!" said a voice behind him, and there came into the room, almost slidped in, so to speak, a tall, thin man, wrapped in a voluminous cloak.

At sight of him Godfrey Knighton rose to his feet, took a step forward, then, staggering slightly, let his hand fall upon the edge of the table, and, clasping it tightly, stood regarding the visitor with a white, set face.

Iris was too engaged in looking at the man to notice the effect his appearance had upon her father, and the man stood for a second regarding them with a smile upon his face which, taken with the face itself, produced a strange and unpleasant impression upon Iris.

It was by no means an ugly face, either. It was dark, almost swarthy, with eyes black and lustrous, too lustrous, indeed; a dark moustache, with pointed and waxed ends, hid his lips; but the smile revealed almost too conspicuously a set of white teeth that, in contrast with the blackness of the moustache and eyes, seemed to gleam.

As he stood for that half-minute of suspense, Iris noticed unconsciously that the ungloved hand was white as a sheet of paper, and long and shapely; the next moment he dropped the hat which it held, and came across the room with the hand extended.

"Ah, Knighton!" he exclaimed in a low and not unmusical voice, and with an accent which Iris knew at once to be Italian. "It is a surprise, is it not? You did not expect me! You are overjoyed—like me—at our meeting! My friend!"

Godfrey Knighton took the outstretched hand, and the visitor instantly laid his other on the top of his host's.

"It is a surprise," he said, and it was evident that though he had recovered from the emotion which the sudden appearance of the man had produced, he was not overjoyed to see him. "No, I did not expect you."

"I said so!" remarked the gentleman, addressing the furniture. "I said those dogs of the post-office would mislay my letter! I said, 'Baptiste, your good friend Knighton will not expect you!' But what matters?—the more unexpected the pleasure, the greater the joy! Is it not so?" and he flashed his black eyes upon Iris.

As he spoke Godfrey Knighton made a movement almost as if he would step in between them, but he recovered himself in an instant.

"This is an old friend of mine, Iris," he said slowly and distinctly.

"Ah, yes! an old friend!" murmured the visitor, flashing his smile upon her. "Knighton, I am right in guessing that this charming young lady is your daughter! It is so! I am delighted! Do me the honor, Knighton, to introduce me! I loathe each moment that keeps us strangers," and he made Iris a swift, subtle kind of bow.

With stern, set face, Godfrey Knighton looked from one to the other, then he said:

"Iris, this is Signor Ricardo, an old friend, as I have said, from Italy."

"From the sunny south, from the land of beauty!" remarked Signor Ricardo. "From your land, Miss Iris! Yes, I am old friend of your father's"—he paused and smiled sweetly upon the stern face of his host—"and your mother's."

Iris held out her hand, and the signor, taking it in his white, long fingers, bowed over it until his lips almost touched it.

Then he drew himself to his full height, flung his cloak open, and regarding Godfrey Knighton with a steady smile, said:

"My friend, you look admirable; Miss Iris is—ah; bah! I have no words; and your place—well, it is magnificent, princely! I cannot express the joy I feel at being with you! And you did not get my letter?"

"No," said Godfrey Knighton. "But I am pleased to see you," he added slowly. "Our dinner is almost ready. Will you go to your room?" and he moved towards the door, but he stretched out his hand and laid it on the sleeve of the squire's dress coat.

"No!" he said with a smile. "You shall not incommode yourself! The servants shall show me my apartments! No ceremony, my dear Knighton; remember, I am an old friend!"

The squire stood still and signed to a footman, and the signor, bestowing a smile and a reverential bow upon Iris, was ushered out.

Iris waited until the door had closed, then turned to her father.

"What a strange person!" she said half-laughing, and yet with a singular feeling of uneasiness and dislike. "What did you say his name was?"

"Ricardo; Ricardo;" Godfrey Knighton replied, his eyes fixed on the door by which the visitor had gone.

"I never heard you speak of him," she said.

"No. I have not seen him, heard of him, for years!" he said, speaking slowly and gravely, his face set darkly and sternly. "I knew him years ago in Italy—a long while ago! He did me a—a certain service. I could not refuse to receive him."

Iris regarded him with surprise.

"Why, no, father! Why should you refuse to see an old friend? And he knew my mother!" she added softly and sadly.

The squire moved uneasily and turned his face further from her.

"Iris," he said, and his voice sounded harsh and strained; "you have always been a good and dutiful girl."

"Father!" she murmured, surprised and waiting.

"Yes! Always good, and dutiful and loving. Listen to me. This man, Signor Ricardo—he—may be inclined to talk of—of the past. You will not encourage him! You will remember that—that anything connected with—with your mother is painful—very deeply painful to me; and you will not encourage him?"

There was a tone of such acute pain and anguish, almost, as it seemed, of fear, in her father's voice, that Iris turned to him and put her hand on his arm as she replied—

"You know I will not,"

"Good, good!" he said. "Yes, I can trust you."

There was silence for a moment, then Iris said:

"Will he stay long?"

The squire frowned.

"How can I tell! You would not have me send him away? He has come a long distance—from Italy, I expect."

"Send him away?" she laughed. As if anybody would be "sent away"? from the Revels by Godfrey Knighton, whose hospitality was Arabian in its extent and thoroughness.

"No, no," he said. "I don't think he will stay long."

Then he went to the table and took up the book he had laid down, as if the conversation were concluded, and Iris stood and waited for the reappearance of the guest.

In a few minutes he came in.

He was in evening dress, and short as the time had been he had meanwhile evidently made his toilette with some little care.

"I have kept dinner waiting! Pardon!" he said, spreading out his hands. "It is all the fault of your trains! I thought English trains were always punctual! Miss Iris will extend her forgiveness to a traveler!"

The dinner-gong sounded at this moment, Godfrey Knighton advanced to offer his arm as usual, but the signorina glided in between them.

"Not so!" he said in a silky voice. "It is my privilege as a visitor! Miss Knighton will honor her father's old friend with her arm."

Godfrey Knighton drew back, and Iris laid the tips of her fingers on the signor's arm, and he led her into the dining room.

By the light which fell from the shaded lamp over the table, Iris regarded the signor with more curiosity than she had bestowed upon him in the drawing-room.

Certainly he was anything but ugly, or even plain. His dark hair was closely cut; there was scarcely a line in the clear oval face.

He might be of any age between five-and

twenty and forty. Looking at him carefully Iris saw that he had a scar on the right temple, but it had not disfigured his face, and it only showed itself when he smiled. She noticed again that his hands were white and shapely, but it was not until he had taken up his spoon for the soup that she remarked their peculiar facility of expression. The long fingers seemed to have a voice, like so many tongues, and to be as expressive as another person's eyes.

Stern and grim, Godfrey Knighton sat at the head of the table; in solemn silence the butler and footman waited, but neither the stern taciturnity of his host, nor the magnificence of the surroundings seemed to awe Signor Ricardo. As he partook of his soup he talked, now to Godfrey Knighton, and now to Iris.

"No pen can describe the horrors of your Channel, Miss Iris! Ah, bah! It was terrible! Nothing but the thought that I should soon meet my dear—my very dear old friend, your father, would have consoled me! I landed, I came straight here, and here I am, under the roof of my old friend the—ah, what do you call it?—the squire of the Revels."

"Is this your first visit to England?" said Iris, feeling that she must say something.

"My first," he answered. "I have heard much of your charming country, Miss Iris, but, ah, no, this is not your country! Italy is your country——"

"Take some wine," Godfrey Knighton broke in in a stern voice.

"But I am English," said Iris, smilingly—"quite English!"

"Bah!" said the signor, and his fingers seemed to say "Bah!" too. "You are Italian—one half of you, at any rate. Once an Italian, always an Italian. Is it not so, my friend?" and he appealed to Godfrey Knighton.

"My daughter is English in teaching and training and instinct," he said sternly.

"That for your teaching and training," retorted the signor, and he snapped his fingers. "The signorina is Italian, I tell you. Ah! how the years roll on. But they roll very smoothly over you, Knighton. Yes, indeed, you seem no older than when I saw you in Florence——"

"Try that salmi," broke in Godfrey Knighton.

So the dinner progressed. Whenever the signor referred to Italy and the past, Godfrey Knighton interrupted him; and, at last, when the dessert made its appearance, Iris rose, and the signor, gliding from his chair, opened the door for her.

The butler laid the choice Chateau la Rose upon the table and left the room, and Godfrey Knighton, looking sternly at his guest, who was holding the glass of ruby-colored wine before the light, said:

"What does this mean Ricardo?"

"This what?" demanded the signor, raising his eyebrows.

"Why do you come here?" asked the squire of Knighton and Beverly.

"Why do I come here?" retorted the signor. "Saints and angels, where else should I come when I am in England but to my old friend Knighton?" and he threw a peculiarly unpleasant smile across the table.

"But why, why?" demanded the squire, sternly and impatiently.

The signor shrugged his shoulders.

"If you will have it bluntly, after the manner of your race," he said, "I came because I am what you call 'hard up.'"

"And you think that I shall fee you, bribe you?" said Godfrey Knighton, between his teeth.

"Pardon!" murmured the signor, raising his glass, and bowing over it towards the stern face with a graceful bonhomie. "Fee, bribe, are two ugly words. That I expect my old friend to assist me in the liberal manner which is truly English—yes! But fee! bribe! They are two odious words!"

"Odious or not, you mean to blackmail me!" said the squire sternly. "Suppose I refuse to give you one single penny, what will you do?"

"What will I do?" said the signor, selecting a forced strawberry, and placing it between his lips daintily. "What will I do? Well, I think I will go to the signorina your daughter——"

"And then?" demanded Godfrey Knighton.

"Then," said the signor, with the smile that showed all his teeth—"then I should tell her the whole history of her mother——"

Godfrey Knighton rose, then sank into his chair again.

"Listen to me, Ricardo," he said; "sooner than that, I would, as you know, endure much. Yes, I confess it! Now, name your price! You must not remain under this roof after to-night! I am in your power, and I acknowledge it! Name your price, you—you devil!"

"Softly, softly!" said the signor with a sinister laugh. "You use hard names, my dear friend, my dear old friend! As to my price we can talk of that presently, to-morrow—the day after—next week! As to leaving your beautiful place, your hospitable roof—bah! it likes me too much! Here I am and here I stay!"

Godfrey Knighton uttered an oath, and catching up a large steel knife which had been placed for cutting the pine, leaned towards his guest.

Signor Ricardo slipped his hand into his breast and produced a revolver.

"Softly, my friend!" he said smiling, but with a ferocious light in his eyes. "Put down your knife. Oh, I know you of old! But here, in England, we do not use knives, nor guns. Is it not so? Only brains! Let us join your charming daughter; we can talk over our little business to-morrow!"

"Stop!" said Godfrey Knighton, letting the knife fall with a clatter against his plate. "You are right; it is not with the knife or the revolver we must settle this."

"Santa Lucia! I should think not! No!" assented the signor, shrugging his broad shoulders.

"It is with you a question of money," continued the squire, wiping his face upon which great beads of sweat stood; "you can have no other motive, no other object. How much do you want? Take it, and for Heaven's sake begone, and let me live here in peace!"

The signor raised his glass and sipped his wine with an enjoyment as rare as the wine itself.

"You are right," he said; "it is a question of money, but not money only. Oh, I am aware that whatever I ask you must pay, you must pay. For you wouldn't like me to go to that beautiful girl, your daughter, and say, 'Miss Iris, I can tell you the story of your mother!' No, you would not like that! Therefore, you are willing to pay anything—anything! But my friend, my dear old friend, I have not made up my mind how much to ask! I have just arrived on your bleak shore, I find myself in comfortable quarters. I say to myself, 'Here are you, Baptiste, in the house of your friend; you may stay here and live like a prince.' And naturally, I decide to stay for a while!"

Godfrey Knighton sat with knitted brow and clenched teeth.

"Take care!" he said. "Do not push me too hard!"

"Push you too hard!" echoed the signor. "How do I push you too hard? I come as an old friend—your guest. I stay at your invitation! Is it not natural? And stay I shall my friend, depend upon it!"

Godfrey Knighton leaned forward.

"Have you no pity, no mercy?" he asked hoarsely. "You have seen her. You see how innocent she is, how trusting. Are you such a fiend that you can destroy her young and hopeful life——"

The signor interrupted him with a snap of his eloquent and elastic fingers.

"Bah, my friend! A man of the world thinks only of himself! I was once young and innocent, and the wolves and the hawks they fed upon me! I am no longer young and innocent—and it is my turn. You talk—pardon me, my dear Knighton—like a character in a play! Here I am with a secret—your secret—for disposal. I have a price—good! You are prepared to pay that price—good! But I am not yet ready to say what that price shall be! In the meanwhile I remain a guest of my distinguished friend the squire of the Revels and—what is the place?—the Beverly. Good again! And now let us go to your charming daughter!"

Godfrey rose without another word and they went into the drawing room.

Iris was seated at the piano, but she rose as they entered.

"Do not rise, I beseech you," said the signor; "I am an Italian, and therefore a slave to music! Play for us, Miss Iris; or better still, sing!"

Iris looked at her father. He averted his face, and stood with stern, bent brows, looking at the ground.

"You do sing!" said the signor triumphantly. "I pray a song of you Miss Iris."

Iris did not know what to do. She knew that her father did not like to hear her sing, and yet this visitor, this "old friend" demanded it of her.

"Sing, Iris," said Mr. Knighton in a strained voice.

Still hesitating and reluctant, she sat down to the piano, and turned over the music; then she took a selection and commenced to sing.

Silence reigned supreme until she had finished, then the signor clapped his hands.

"Bravo, bravissimo!" he said. "Miss Iris, you have a voice, one in a thousand! It is a voice which the crowd would gladly listen to! It is a fortune, is it not so, Knighton? Speak truly; is not her voice magnificent, splendid, overwhelming?"

Godfrey bowed his assent coldly, and the signor added in an undertone—

"It is her mother's voice! Note for note! It is splendid!"

Then aloud he said—

"Will you sing again, Miss Iris? I am an Italian, and I love music! It is the food of my nation! Truly yes!"

"Shall I?" she murmured to her father.

"Yes, if you like," he answered, and she sang again.

The signor's admiration seemed to know no bounds.

"It is splendid!" he said. "It is a voice which would move a crowded theatre to enthusiasm! Ah, but what a gift! and wasted, wasted!"

Coffee was brought in, and Iris gave him a cup, then took her fancy work and drew away from them.

The squire stood and drank his coffee in silence. The footman came in with the bed-room candles.

"Is it 'Good-night!'?" said the signor: "so soon! It has been a delightful evening. Good-night, Miss Iris! Your voice will linger in my ears through all my dreams. Good-night, my friend!" and he shook hands with the squire.

They were standing near the door as this ceremony was performed, and the signor, as he stepped, with his strange, peculiar gliding step, into the hall, nearly ran against someone.

He pulled up with a bow and a "Pardon!"; but the person against whom he had collided uttered a cry of terror and shrank back.

Iris ran towards the door, and was just in time to see Felice crouching against the wall.

"What is the matter, Felice?" she said.

The woman, her eyes fixed upon the signor, tried to answer; but the signor spoke for her.

"The matter, Miss Iris?" he said; "it is my clumsy stupidity! I did knock myself against this young woman, that is all! I beg ten thousand pardons!" and he bestowed an elaborate bow upon Felice.

"Are you hurt, Felice?" asked Iris.

"No, no, signorina; I am not hurt!" replied the woman; and with lowered eyes she shrank back and disappeared.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

A RARE OLD WINE.—In one of the cellars of the Rathskeller, Bremen, are twelve large casks, each one bearing the name of one of the twelve apostles. These contain the celebrated "Rosenwein," which was deposited there in 1624. One cask of this wine, containing 204 bottles, cost 500 rix dollars at that time. Taking all expenses into account, and compounding the interest, a single glass, one-eighth of a bottle, would cost about $300,000, or $300 a drop.

DECKING HOUSES.—The common custom of decking the houses and churches with evergreens at Christmas, dates back to the ancient Druids, whose belief was that sylvan spirits might flock to the evergreens, and remain unnipped by the frost until a milder season. The holly, ivy, rosemary, bay, laurel and mistletoe, furnished the favorite trimmings, which were not removed till Candlemas. Chaplets of these were also worn about the head—a practice to which the phrases "to kiss under the rose" and "to whisper under the mistletoe" are allusions.

A 1.—This is primarily the rating of first-class vessels at Lloyd's, a great insurance centre in England. The rating is assigned to a new ship for a fixed term of years, seldom more than fifteen, nor less than four—according to the materials and workmanship. The rating may be afterwards extended on certain conditions. The A stands for the state of the hull, and 1 for the rigging, anchors and other fitments. A2 would designate a ship with first class hull, but without the very best outfit in other respects; aal is a rating sometimes given to ships of extremely fine construction. A, E and I are inferior ratings for ships.

ABOUT NUMBERS.—There is a well know superstition current since the days of Ovid, that peculiar virtue, strength or danger lies in the ninth wave of a series. The ancients not only noted the importance of seven as an astronomical period but also connected with the seven planets the seven metals then known. The second digit acquired an especially evil reputation among the early Christians, because the second day hell was created, along with heaven and earth. The number nine, besides being regarded as a lucky one, is possessed of mysterious properties, intensified by its being the product of three times three. The Siamese have a regard for odd numbers, and insist on having an odd number of doors, windows and rooms in their houses, and that all staircases must also have an odd number of steps.

FATE NOT TO BE AVOIDED.—Two men—one a philosopher and the other a fool—were in the service of the same master, and both slept in the same bed; the philosopher lay on the outside. One morning, having overslept themselves, the master, coming with a whip, flogged the philosopher, who happened to be nearest to the entrance of the room. "This I will avoid another time," said the philosopher to himself. On the next night he changed sides with the fool. In the morning they again transgressed, and the master came to chastise them; but reflecting that he had before whipped the man that was nearest, he thought it but just the other should feel his displeasure. He went to the other side of the bed, and the blows fell again upon the poor philosopher, thus confirming the general truth—"the wisest cannot avoid their general fate."

THE FIRST.—The first day of note after the New Year's Day is Epiphany, or Twelfth Day, January the sixth. In the Eastern Church, Christmas and Epiphany are deemed but one and the same feast, though our young people only know the latter as Twelfth Day. The cake, which in most places formed an important part of the entertainment of this day, was known, as it is still known, by the name of Twelfth Cake. This cake was covered with figures representing a King and Queen, and a number of grotesque characters made of sugar and eggs. This was cut up on the Vigil of Twelfth Day. A bag containing a number of tickets on them corresponding to those on the cake, was passed round, and each drew one and received as a prize the piece of cake which had a similar character on it. A great deal of mirth was occasioned by the distribution of the prizes. The old calendars state that on this day's vigil "Kings were created or elected by beans, otherwise, by drawing the chief prize on the cake, and thus the day was dominated 'the Festival of Kings'"—a term still retained in Spain.

MYSTIC NUMBERS.—To see nine magpies is extremely unlucky.

In France a seventh son in direct succession is called a "marcou," one form of mascon.

Virgil tells us in the eighth Eclogue, that the gods esteemed odd numbers.

The seven days of creation led to a septenary division of time to all ages.

There were seven wise men in antiquity, and seven wonders of the world.

Nine grains of wheat, laid on a four-leaved clover, enable one to see the fairies.

It was an ancient belief that a change in the body of man occurs every seventh year.

Falstaff says: "They say there is divinity in odd numbers, either by nativity, chance or death."

Nine knots made in a black woolen thread formerly served as a charm in the case of a sprain.

In many parts of England and in the United States an odd number of eggs is put under a setting hen.

The number three was the perfect number of the Pythagoreans, who said it represented the beginning, middle and end.

In the Seal Islands there is a superstition that seals cast off their skins every ninth month and assume the human shape.

SOME GOOD RULES.—Jefferson's ten rules are good yet. They are short and concise, and embody so much of value, that it would be well if they were clipped and put where they could be seen often. They read as follows:

1. Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day.

2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.

3. Never spend your money before you have it.

4. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap.

5. Pride costs more than hunger, thirst and cold.

6. We seldom repent of having eaten too little.

7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.

8. How much pain the evils have cost us that have never happened.

9. Take things always by the smooth handle.

10. When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, count a hundred.

IN RUSSIA it is the custom for the bridegroom to send the bride's fan, boquet and gloves to her on the eve of the wedding.

PAST AND O'ER.

BY E. O.

In twilight's hour to sit and dream,
Beside the gently-purling stream,
And, as I hear its ripples flow,
To me come thoughts of long ago!

For there, in days that long have fled,
Sweet words to me were sweetly said,
That were to link our hearts for aye,
And live forever and a day!

O, 'tis the wind that stirs the trees,
And bears a sound across the leas,
A tender sound that in my heart
So strangely finds a counterpart!

Ah, no! it is the voice of old,
And hands again mine own enfold,
Sweet words are sweetly breath'd once more,
And doubts and fearsare past and o'er!

A GOLDEN PRIZE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "BY CROOKED PATHS," "SHEATHED IN VELVET," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.

KATE clutched a chair tightly, her whole form shivering with horror and loathing.

"I daresay you can get him to compromise the business. He can have a slice of the income, say a third or a quarter. After all, he mightn't win the case; it's not so easy to prove a claim of this kind. I'd give him a quarter of the income to let me alone. But you'll know how to manage that."

"You—you think I would do this?—you ask me?" she breathed, her eyes full of unspeakable contempt and scorn.

"Of course you will, Oh, not for my sake; I don't think that," he retorted, with a sneer "but for your own. It wouldn't be pleasant to lose your coronet, and sink into plain Mrs. Arthur Carr-Lyon, and it wouldn't be pleasant to come before the world as the daughter of a man who was doing his seven years——"

She put her hands to her head with a gesture of despair and he smiled.

"That touches you, does it? Well, you can do the self-sacrificing daughter, don't you know. Anyhow, there's nothing else to be done that I can think of."

There was silence for a moment or two; the clock ticked mockingly on the mantelshelf, the ashes of the dying fire fell mournfully on the hearth, and Kate stood confronted by the spectre of her ruined life.

Presently he began to walk up and down the hearthrug; then he stopped a little nearer her, and looked at her strangely, a look of admiration and dislike blended.

"Look here!" he said, "I don't bear malice, I mean to have this out with you; I mean to show you that I know your little game, and now I've done it I feel better. You and I understand each other now, and that being the case, there is no reason why we shouldn't get on very well together."

A chill ran through Kate's frame, and she shrank back a little.

"We're married and can't be unmarried; and there's no use in crying over spilt milk. We'll call quits,—if you like, from to-night,—and play this game together. Eh; what do you say, Kate? Come, don't bear malice."

He took a step towards her, and put out his hand as if to take hers; but she drew back and raised her hand, palm outwards, as if to repulse him.

"Don't—don't touch me!" she breathed, her face white, her eyes blazing and distended.

"What nonsense!" he laughed, but uneasily; "what's the use of taking the affair like that? I say we're married—you are my wife—there's no getting over that, and we'd better make the best of it. Let us shake hands and—to be friends."

"Stop!" she said, drawing herself to her full height, and seeming to tower above him in the dignity of her insulted womanhood. "We are married—I am your wife—I know it; but do not come near me,—do not touch me!"

His face flushed, and an evil look came into his eyes.

"Your are playing the fool!" he said sullenly. "You don't know what you are saying."

"Yes; I know—" she said with a long breath, "I am your wife; it cannot be undone, but I am not helpless—I am not afraid; Dare to touch me with one finger, and I will rouse the house and tell the servants all that you have told me!"

He muttered an oath and strode towards her; she did not retreat; but laid her hand upon the bell and he stopped.

They stood looking into each other's eyes for a full minute; then she said in a low voice, that sounded harsh and strained,—

"You had better leave me; you have driven me desperate. Utter one more threat such as you have used, and I proclaim the whole story to the world—to Lord Carr-Lyon! Go!"

He stood for a while irresolute, eyeing her savagely; then he shrugged his shoulders and set his teeth.

"You are my wife," he said, breathing thickly. "If you think you are going to set me at defiance in my own house——" and he took a step nearer.

"Stand back!" she said slowly. "I am in your house, but there is no servant in it, however mean, who would no if he knew all, protect me; and if you lay one finger upon me, I will ring the bell, and expose you! Do not touch me!"

His hand was almost upon her, his face red with rage and a far worse passion. Then he stopped, and drew back, and, with an oath, he walked quickly from the room.

* * * * * *

Kate stood panting, but not trembling, for her wrongs had given her momentary strength and courage, while one could count twenty; then she went slowly up to her own room. The maid, Marie, was waiting for her, and started as she saw the awful pallor of her mistress's face.

"Oh! are you ill, my lady?" she exclaimed, anxiously,

"Yes," said Kate, sinking into a chair. "No, do not ring"—for the girl's hand had gone to the bell—"give me some sal volatile; thanks. It is nothing serious. I am overtired, and—you will not leave me to-night—you will stay with me?" she asked, suddenly, with an appealing look at the girl's pleasant, honest face.

"Of course I will, my lady," she replied instantly. "I can make up a bed in the dressing-room. I should hear you in a moment if you woke, and wanted anything. Is there nothing I can do?—shall I go for his lordship?"

A shudder ran through Kate's frame, and she looked at the girl steadily.

"Marie," she said, in a low voice, while a burning blush passed for a moment over her face, "Lord Carr-Lyon and I—have quarreled——"

"Oh, my lady!" exclaimed the girl, aghast; "and on your wedding-day, too!"

"Yes, on my wedding-day!" said Kate, trying to speak calmly. "I tell you this because I have no friend—I know no one—" her voice broke and she put her hand before her eyes.

The girl threw herself on her knees beside her and touched her hand with respectful sympathy.

"Oh, my lady, you may trust me!" she said in a low voice. "I—I am only a servant, but I will stand by you: yes, though all the world was against you!"

Kate put her hand on the girl's head.

"Thank you, Marie," she said almost inaudibly. "I will trust you. I am in great and terrible trouble. I do not think any women was ever in greater trouble than I am, and I do not know which way to turn or what to do. I cannot tell you all that has happened to me. Leave me now and I will try and rest."

The girl wrapped her in a fur-lined dressing-gown and went and made up a bed in the next room, and Kate was left alone.

For long hours she sat and stared at the fire incapable of thought, incapable of planning out any course of action for herself.

It all seemed too horrible to be true, too horrible almost for a dream. She had been sold by her father to a man who knew himself to be an impostor, and had married her, not for love but for revenge. And she was in his power!

But it was not so much of herself, after all, that she thought, but of Clifford Raven. He was the real Earl of Carr-Lyon and this her husband, was a usurper, and counted upon her assisting him in still depriving Clifford of his birthright.

The real Earl of Carr-Lyon! And he had been so when she saw him first, wan and hungry in the lane at Sandford! Had been so when he had told her that he loved her on the terrace at Lydcote!

Did he know it? Could there be any question as to what was her first duty. She must proclaim the fact of his identity and right to the title. But how was she to do this—where was he? Throughout his revelation, Arthur Carr-Lyon had carefully abstained from telling her where Desmond Carr-Lyon was to be found. He might have left England, she might be months finding him. And, meanwhile was she to go on playing her part before the world, bearing the title she had no right to, helping the man who had robbed him to rob him still?

She looked round the luxurious room, and groaned in an agony of spirit.

"Oh, if I could but die, but die!" she wailed. "If there could only be an end of it all to-night! What shall I do? What shall I do?"

She walked up and down till the dawn crept through the lace curtains of the window, then she fell on her knees and remained so for some time.

When she rose she was calmer, and her mind clearer, for strength had come to her.

First, she must find Clifford Raven, and tell him all she knew. That was the first thing to do; after that came chaos with only one thing clear; that she would leave the man who had entrapped her, the man who had ensnared and enslaved her.

She called Marie, and the girl, with murmured words of sympathy and sorrow, dressed her, and then got her some tea.

Kate managed to drink it, though every drop threatened to choke her; then she lay down for awhile.

Presently, a little before eleven o'clock she heard a voice in the hall. It was her father's.

With a shudder she hid her face in her hands and drew the dressing-gown about her head as if to shut the voice out; then she started, and motioning to Marie to be silent, opened the door, and creeping on the landing listened.

If she could manage to overhear the conversation between the two men, she might ascertain Clifford Raven's whereabouts.

Slowly and cautiously she went down the stairs and entered a small room adjoining the dining room.

There were heavy curtains of art fabrics all over the place, and a pair served as a screen between the two rooms. Behind these she stood, white and trembling but resolved.

The major had caught an early train, and had come to keep his appointment.

His precious son-in-law had threatened to be rather slippery, and the major felt that the sooner he got his money the better. He had got his plans all cut and dried.

Once he had cashed his cheque, good-bye to Sandford, and indeed to England.

In fact the greater the distance he could put between himself and Albion's white cliffs the better.

Any moment Clifford Raven might discover that he was the rightful owner of the title and estates, and then the bubble would burst.

And it would be just as well that the major should be out of reach when that time came.

"Of course," he told himself, "they'll compromise matters; Arthur will be tolerably well off, I've no doubt; shouldn't wonder if Desmond gives him half the income for Kate's sake."

Yes, it had all gone, or would go, beautifully, once he got his part of the plunder.

"Is the earl in?" he asked the butler, in his best and most affable manner.

"His lordship is not down yet," said the man.

"All right, just tell him I am here, will you, but tell him not to hurry, and—ahem!—don't let her ladyship's mind disturb her ladyship."

It would be just as well perhaps if he did not see Kate that morning.

The butler went, and the major amused himself with the paper; tried to amuse himself rather for he felt restless and uneasy.

Presently the door opened, and Arthur Carr-Lyon entered.

He was in a dressing-gown and slippers, and his face was white, with livid shadows under his eyes, which looked dull and bloodshot, as if he had spent the night in company with a brandy bottle, as indeed he had.

"Ah, my dear Arthur!" exclaimed the major, extending his hand and smiling affectionately. "Here I am you see, just like a jack in a box. Fact is, I had business in London this morning, and I thought I'd drop in. How are you? You are looking the picture of health, as usual."

"Am I?" said Arthur Carr-Lyon, eyeing him coldly. "Then my looks lie. I've got a confounded headache, and my eyes are on fire. So you've come, have you? Scarcely necessary to ask for what. You haven't lost any time. What are you afraid of? That I should run away, or that Coutts' Bank should break, or what?"

The major laughed with feigned cheerfulness.

"What a fellow you are to chaff, my dear Arthur!" he said, rubbing his hands. "Wonderful flow of humor, wonderful. No, no, I'm not afraid of anything of the kind; but the fact is—ahem!—that I've got some bills to meet, and I thought that cheque would be useful, you know. Besides, I know you'd rather have it off your mind."

"Yes, you're all consideration for me," said Arthur Carr-Lyon, with a slight sneer.

Then he sat down to the table, and drew a despatch-box towards him.

"Well, I suppose you've got to have it. You want your blood money."

The major started, and turned rather red.

"My dear boy, that language——"

"What do you call it, then?" demanded Arthur Carr-Lyon, turning in his chair and eyeing him steadily. "Is there any other name you could give the money a man gets for selling his own daughter?"

"My dear Arthur——"

"Do you mean to say you didn't sell her?" he repeated with suppressed savagery. "Do you mean to say that she married me of her own free will? That she cared for me, loved me? Even you couldn't lie like that, good at that sort of thing as you are. You knew she hated me!"

"My dear boy," said the major, more in sorrow than in anger, "this is strange language from a son-in-law to his father! Come, I'm sure Kate——"

"Leave her name alone," broke in the other hoarsely. "I don't want to hear it. I've got to reckon with you this morning, and I won't have her name mentioned——"

The major expanded his chest.

"I don't understand why you receive me in this spirit, Carr-Lyon," he said, beginning to bluster a little. "You know the arrangement between us. I've fulfilled my part of the contract, and I expect you to complete yours."

"Or else? What? You mean to threaten me, do you? Speak out!"

"Threaten, not at all. What should I have to threaten you with?"

"You don't know?" he demanded, with a sneer. "I'll tell you. If I don't give you this cheque, you'll split upon me! You'll go and make terms with Desmond—eh?"

The major started, and his face went white.

"Desmond!" he stammered, "Do you mean your Cousin Desmond? Poor fellow, he lies dead and cold out there in Nevada——"

"That's a lie!" said Arthur Carr-Lyon slowly, and fixing the major's eye with a steady glare.

"What?" exclaimed the major.

Arthur Carr-Lyon rose, and pushed the despatch-box from him with an oath.

"I meant to play you a bit longer, to lead you on like a cat and mouse, and then smash you, but I haven't patience," he said. "Do you remember the morning, three weeks ago, I asked you if you knew Clifford Raven?"

"Clifford Raven!" breathed the major, sinking into a chair, and grasping the arms convulsively.

"Yes; and you lied, as you always do: You said that you didn't, that you'd never heard the name. Stop,—don't speak; it isn't worth while. I'll tell you who he is; he is Desmond Carr-Lyon, the man who owns the title and the estates—and you know it!"

"I—I——" stammered the major.

—"And you knew it all along. You knew it when it was too late to go back on me, or you would, wouldn't you? But it didn't pay you. You'd gone to far,—you'd put your head into the noose. What do they give a man for perjury with intent to defraud? Seven years! That frightened you, didn't it? It frightens you now!" and he pointed a shaking finger at the major's white, stricken face. "But that wasn't all You'd made a good bargain with me; you stood to win on the wrong horse, and you thought it best to sell the right one. You were to have this money—this blood money—for betraying Kate, and when you'd got it you were going to be off. Ah!" and he grinned sardonically, "you'd have been off in a day or two—to morrow, eh?—and left me to fight the battle! I know you; I haven't spent all these months in your society for nothing. You stood to win in this game, whoever lost,—me, or Kate, or Desmond! You—you—what can I call you?"

The major cowered, absolutely cowered.

"It's—it's not true," he faltered hoarsely. "Someone's been deceiving you."

"Yes,—you!" retorted Arthur Carr-Lyon. "What! you'd stand and brave it out. You'd lie even to me, who know all your game? Why, man, I've seen this Clifford Raven—Desmond—myself, with my own eyes!"

"Where?" gasped the major.

Kate grasped the curtain tightly to keep her from falling.

Now, now she could hear what she wanted.

Arthur Carr-Lyon laughed with malignant enjoyment.

"Where?—I'll tell you. Under your nose all the time! waiting for the moment to come down upon you—and me. You knew he was alive—stop, spare yourself the trouble of denying it—I know it. He was in your house; he was never very far away after that. Why, man, I saw him myself in a cottage at the quarry near Sandford and he's there now!"

The major sprang to his feet, and looked round fearfully, with the great drops of sweat standing on his brow, as if he expected to see the man he had defrauded standing beside him.

"There!" he gasped.

"Yes, there!" retorted Arthur Carr-Lyon. "Why, man, he was at the ball at Lydcote. And do you know what he was there for?"

The major passed his hand over his wet brow.

—"Because he was in love with Miss Kate!"

The major started, and Arthur Carr-Lyon laughed harshly.

"Yes, you have made a mess of it, major. You have married her to the wrong man! But it's too late, isn't it? I've been one too many for you!—for you, for him, for her!"

And he chuckled savagely.

"The odds were against me one time, but some fellow knocked Desmond on the head, and laid him up, and I got time to play my cards, and beat the lot of you."

The major uttered an exclamation of impotent rage.

"That touches you, does it!" sneered Arthur Carr-Lyon. "It's the truth, Kate's mine; let him come forward as soon as he likes—you can't undo that wedding, major. You can sell me to him, take the title and the money, but you can't take her from me!"

The major, utterly broken and bewildered, leaned forward.

"I swear," he said, hoarsely, "I did all for the best. As you say, you have got Kate. I kept my word; give me the money, and let me go. Arthur——" he struggled with his voice, "I did all for the best! It's not so bad after all. If—if Desmond comes forward, you can compromise—you can fight him! I'll stand by you. He can't prove his identity. Give me the cheque——"

Arthur Carr-Lyon laughed derisively.

"What do you take me for?" he demanded, with a sneer. "You'd stand by me a long time after I'd given you the means to cut and run! No, major, you'll have to earn that money yet! Besides, I don't fancy parting with a big sum like that; I've got quite enough to account for if Desmond wins! I'm afraid you're disappointed though," and he smiled very tauntingly.

The major's face was horrible to look upon.

To be trapped by the man for whom he had set a trap; to be beaten at his own game by this man, whom he had regarded as a foolish, weak-minded tool! It was unendurable, maddening!

The younger man laughed.

"You're thinking that you'd like to go and make terms with Desmond, ain't you, major? But it's a little too late, isn't it? It would be awkward to acknowledge to a man that you'd sworn to his death, would it not? As I told Kate last night——"

The major started.

"You told Kate?" he almost screamed, leaning forward with starting eyes.

Arthur Carr-Lyon nodded sullenly.

"Yes," he said moodily. "I showed her that I was not the fool you and she thought me! I knocked the coronet off her head, major, and let her see the pit she had fallen into."

"You told her Clifford Raven was the earl?" demanded the major.

Arthur Carr-Lyon nodded.

"I told her everything," he said. "I couldn't have kept it to save my life! I wanted to crow over her, and I did!"

"And she?" demanded the major.

Arthur Carr-Lyon's face grew red.

"We've parted!" he said curtly.

The major got up and stood over him, speechless for a moment.

"You—you—fool!" he hissed. "Don't you see what you have done? She will denounce you—both of us!"

Arthur Carr-Lyon sneered.

"Not if the daughter is like the father," he said. "She won't be too ready to give up her title! Trust her for that!"

The major almost choked in his frenzy.

"You fool!" he gasped. "You don't know her! Her title! Do you think she cares for that! Do you think she married you for that? She married you because I put pressure on her; I told her I was in your power. If you were a duke, a prince, she would renounce the title if she knew it did not belong to her. Arthur—you have cut the ground from under your feet! To tell Kate ——"

"She's my wife," he said doggedly. "She must be on our side. I want her to use her —her influence with Desmond——"

The major groaned.

"Oh, you don't know her!" he said very hoarsely. "She'd move Heaven and earth on his side, on the side of justice."

There was a pause, and the two men looked at each other.

It seemed as if for the moment they forgot their mutual enmity in their mutual and awful danger.

"Let me think," said the major, pacing up and down. "Give me something to drink. All is not lost, even yet."

Arthur Carr-Lyon got up doggedly, and pushing the curtains aside, went slowly into the next room and brought some brandy.

The major drank some, and fell to pacing the room again.

"Arthur," he said, in a low, hoarse voice, as he stopped and faced him. "You and I are in a hole! We must stand together! You want to keep the title; I want—I must have—the money you have promised me. There's only one life between you and the title—Desmond's. He may know nothing yet—there is time to—to—" he stopped, and a quick convulsion passed over his white face.

"What do you mean?" demanded Arthur Carr-Lyon, avoiding his glance.

The major sank into the chair and leant forward so that he was near enough to speak in a whisper.

"You say Desmond is lying at the cottage, ill, he may not recover. Accidents may happen, may be made to happen——"

Arthur Carr-Lyon started and his lips twitched, but he said nothing, and kept his eyes fixed on the ground.

"If Desmond should recover and—and come forward, you are ruined, and I have to account for that mistake about his death. He must not recover——"

Arthur Carr-Lyon started, and his hands shut convulsively.

"You say some man attacked him," said the major, in a hoarse whisper. "You must find this man. He may be bought——"

The young man shrunk back, then, as if fascinated, leant forward again and listened.

"A hundred things may happen to a sick man. You understand? Think of it! Only one life between you and the title!"

"No, no!" gasped Arthur Carr-Lyon. "I'll have nothing to do with that—that sort of thing——" and he shuddered.

The major drew a long breath.

"Then the only thing is to make Kate work on him. Where is she now?"

Arthur Carr-Lyon jerked his head upwards.

"In her own room," he said sullenly.

"She must be watched," said the major. "She is the kind of girl who would never rest until she had proclaimed the truth. Go and see her. Stop, let me go. She must not leave the house or send a letter—Heaven and earth, it may even now be too late!" and he started up. "Desmond may know nothing unless she tells him."

"Go and see her," said Arthur Carr-Lyon. "Tell her, what I told her last night, that you are in danger. Don't mention me, she hates me, but she'll do anything for you. Persuade her to work with us."

The two men sat close together talking and scheming, little guessed at the scene that was being enacted over their heads.

Kate had waited until she had ascertained where Clifford Raven was to be found, then she stole softly up the stairs to her own room.

During the moments she had listened in an agony of shame and horror to the revelation of her father—and Arthur Carr-Lyon's—baseness, she had been able to decide a course of action.

To leave the house and find Desmond Carr-Lyon,—to tell him all she knew, and help to restore him to his heritage,—that must be her first task. What became of her afterwards mattered little.

She knew that the two conspirators would try and prevent her, and that if she wished to circumvent them she must use all her mother-wit. She stole softly up the stairs, her heart beating, her limbs trembling, but her resolution firm and irrevocable.

Marie was standing at the door waiting for her pale and anxious.

"Oh, my lady, I'm afraid you'll be ill," she said, looking at Kate's white face anxiously. "Has anything happened? Is there anything I can do?"

"Yes, Marie," said Kate; "there is something you can do. I must leave this house."

"Oh, my lady, is it as bad as that?"

"Yes," said Kate, in a low voice, "I must go at once; and—and I do not want his lordship or anyone to know."

"But, my lady——" said the girl hesitatingly.

Kate began to take off her dressing-gown in feverish haste. She overcame the girl's scruples, and dressing herself hastily in her outdoor robes, carefully watching her opportunity stole out in the street.

CHAPTER XXVII.

KATE, as the door of the house in Park Lane closed after her, drew a long breath of relief. For the present, at any rate, she was free.

For the moment one purpose predominated in her mind, one object stood out clearly; it was her duty to right a cruel wrong; Clifford Raven was Desmond Carr-Lyon, the lawful earl, and it was her duty to acquaint him with the fact.

All thought, all remembrance of her love for him, the love that had sprang into existence on the night of her first meeting with him, was overwhelmed by the desire to do him justice.

He was and could be nothing to her. She was married to the impostor, Arthur Carr-Lyon, was his wife in the eyes of the law; and if she were not, she told herself, she could be nothing to Clifford Raven, who had deceived her, and was doubtless in love with the blue-eyed girl she had seen by his side at Lydcote.

But if she had hated instead of loved him, her duty was still plain before her.

He had been robbed of his inheritance by her father and her husband, and it was in her power to restore to him the title and estate of which he had been defrauded.

She knew that there was a mid-day train to Sandford, and that if she could reach the station, and travel by it unprevented, she should in little more than four hours have executed her mission.

What became of her afterwards she cared little.

To reach Clifford Raven and tell him with her own lips that he was the Earl of Carr-Lyon, that was her burning and overwhelming desire.

She called a cab and told the man to drive to Waterloo, and arrived a few minutes before the train started.

Fortunately she had remembered to put her purse in her pocket; but that she might attract less attention, she took a third-class ticket, and drew her veil close over her face as she entered the train.

While the train remained at the station, she endured agonies of suspense and fear.

Every moment she pictured her father's or her husband's appearance on the platform, and she drew back in the corner of the car shivering and trembling, but resolved that nothing but physical force should persuade her to renounce her purpose.

The bell rang, and the train started. Fortune so far favored her that it was an express, and at half past three she reached Sandford.

As the train drew up at the familiar station, a pang shot through her heart.

She had left it yesterday a bride, without love for her husband, it is true, but with a firm resolution to do her duty; and now she had returned, a fugitive, a wife only in name, and with the purpose of denouncing the man to whom she was tied by all the laws of God and man.

Many a woman would have broken down under the strain, but Kate was no ordinary woman.

She had been tricked and deceived, but, more than that,—she had been deemed vile enough to assist those who had tricked and deceived her into robbing an innocent and injured man, and it stung her into strength.

In the disguise which her maid's clothes and the thick veil afforded, no one recognized her, and she left the station, and walked hurriedly towards the cliff.

It was a lovely afternoon—one of those winter afternoons in which Devonshire manages to simulate the spring—and the sun turned the sea to a plain of opal, and lent the fields the glory of the emerald.

With quick and resolute step, Kate made her way along the path to the quarry.

And, as she went, she thought of her ruined life, and of the dark and dismal future before her!

The Kate Meddon who had so often tripped along this very road had ceased to exist, and in her place was the deceived and injured wife of the impostor, Arthur Carr-Lyon.

Once, twice, she stopped, and looked over the edge of the cliff with a weary and wistful gaze.

Would it not be as well if, after executing her purpose, she were to throw herself into the smiling sea, and so make an end of her wasted life? At any rate, there would be peace and rest.

But she put the awful thought from her, and reached the steep path to the quarry.

She looked down, with her hand pressed against her heart. All was still and quiet; the men had finished their day's work and gone, and the only signs of life were the gulls that flitted to and fro, and the smoke that rose from the chimney of the cottage.

Slowly, for she was tired, she made her way down the steep path, and was crossing the quarry when she stopped suddenly, and her heart seemed to stand still also, for, seated on a huge fragment of rock, was the man for whom she was in search.

He was sitting with his head resting on his hands, his eyes fixed on the sea, so lost in thought and motionless that he seemed part of the rock on which he sat. She saw that his face was pale and thin, that his hands were white, and when she stole a glance at the dark eyes, a wave of pity passed over her heart; they were the saddest eyes she ever seen in all her life!

She began to tremble as she stood and looked, and for the first time her courage failed her; but after a moment or two of indecision, she drew nearer to him, slowly doubtingly.

He did not hear her, so rapt was he in the sorrowful musing, until she was close upon him, then he let his hand fall and turned his head towards her. For a moment it seemed as if he doubted the evidence of his senses, then his face grew white and he put out his hand as if to detain her.

"Kate!" he breathed.

Then he rose but sank down again, and she saw that he was trembling. He struggled for composure, and after a moment or two gained it sufficiently to enable him to rise and remove his hat.

As for her, she could not speak, could do nothing but stand with downcast eyes and quivering lips before the man to whom she had given her heart, but between whom and herself she had dug a gulf which death alone could bridge. He had called her Kate; and his voice rang in her ears like sweet music, for the tone in which he had spoken the name was like a revelation.

"Forgive me, Lady Carr-Lyon," he said with a little catch in his voice as if he were striving to make it commonplace and respectfully conventional. "Your appearance was so unexpected—I had thought that you were miles away—I did not know—" the poor fellow stopped and made a gesture almost pitiful; how could he tell her that he had been thinking of her at that moment; that his bruised and aching heart had been dwelling upon her; and that her sudden appearance had completely unnerved him? "I thought you were in London," he went on, venturing to glance at her—just a glance at her. "Is there anything the matter—your father?" he asked with swift apprehension.

"My father is well," she said, and her voice sounded hollow and forced.

"He is with you here—or your—your husband?" he said, looking round as if he expected to see them.

"No, I am alone," she replied.

He started and looked at her fixedly, with a troubled gathering together of the brows.

"Alone! Here at Sandford, and alone!" he exclaimed, in a low voice. "Why—what is the meaning——"

"May I sit down?" she said, with a weary sigh.

Even at that moment of suspense he thought of her comfort. With a quick movement he flung off his coat, and spread it on the rock.

"No, no," she faltered, touched to the quick by the little act, but he moved his hand towards the rock with that air of gentle command which no woman can resist in the man she loves, and she sat down.

"Now tell me," he said, standing beside her and looking down at her anxiously. "Tell me what has happened; why you have come here. Wait!"

He strode away from her quickly; and disappeared in the cottage. Presently he came back with a glass of water.

She took it gratefully, almost humbly, and drank some. Her lips felt parched, her throat dry and burning.

Now that she was in his presence, that he stood beside her in all his manliness and tenderness, she realized what it was that she had done in marrying the sinister scoundrel Arthur Carr-Lyon.

"Did you come to see Mr. Woode—to see me—whom?" he asked, thinking and striving to help her.

"I came to see you," she said, her hands clasped, her head bent away from him.

He drew a long breath.

"To see me. Then—then you have something to tell me; you are in trouble, Lady Carr-Lyon?"

"Yes, I am in trouble, I have something to tell you," she answered in a low voice, "Do not call me Lady Carr-Lyon."

He started, and a swift flush rose to his face, then left it pale again.

"Alas, I must!" he said, with hanging head. "You were married yesterday—" he stopped, and turned slightly away from her, that she might not see the agony in his face.

"Yes, I was married yesterday," she said; then she put her hand to her eyes and tried to force back the tears that filled them for the first time.

"For Heaven's sake do not—do not cry!" he pleaded hoarsely, feeling as if he must throw himself on his knees beside her and comfort her. "Tell me what has happened; why you have come to me, and let me help you—if I can. Why is not Lord Carr-Lyon, your husband, with you? Is it possible that he can have allowed you to travel from London alone——"

"I came without his permission," she said slowly. "He does not know—I have left him!"

"Left him!" he echoed in amazement, and sorely touched; thinking of her, and her alone. "You have left him—what has he done?" and his hands clenched tightly.

"He has deceived me," she said. "But it is not of myself that I want to speak; it is of you——"

"Of me! Of what consequence am I? It is you, you!" he broke in quickly. "You have left Arthur—Lord Carr-Lyon," he corrected himself quickly. "Why—why did you marry him?" and his lips quivered.

She turned her head away.

"Because I was mad," came her answer quickly.

He looked down at her, his face working.

"I—I can scarcely believe that I am not dreaming," he said almost to himself. "Married yesterday, and now—here and alone! Oh, this is torture!" and, moved beyond himself, he bent down his hands fluttering over her in a wild desire to touch her, to catch her to his heart, "Oh, why, why did you do it? What made you do it? Why do you come here and torture me with the sight of you? Don't you know how it is with me? Yes, you do know! You have known all the time that I loved you! Oh, have pity on me and forgive me! How can I help speaking out when I see you here so near to me?—you whom I had prayed that I might never see again!" and he turned his head away.

There was no tear in her eyes now, for there is an anguish that mocks at tears, and it held possession of Kate Carr-Lyon at that moment.

"Forgive me," he said, regaining his composure. "I will keep a guard on my tongue, I will not speak so again. But tell me—you say you have left him. Why? How? Has he deceived you?"

"He is a villain," she said, in a dry, hard voice. "I know all that he has done; he has confessed to me, has boasted of his villainy. I have left him forever."

He clenched his hands together.

"And you found this out to-day?—when?" he asked hoarsely.

"Yesterday; a few hours after—after I had married him!"

A groan burst from his lips.

"Heaven give me strength to bear this," was his muttered prayer.

"I married him because I was mad," she went on, slowly, in the same dry voice. "I know what you think—you cannot help thinking it! All the world deems me guilty of selling myself for title and money."

"No, no!—not I!—not I!" he exclaimed, vehemently. "It's all a mystery to me—your marriage, but I have never so wronged you."

And he held out his hands towards her appealingly.

She raised her eyes to his with humble gratitude.

"That night, on the terrace, when you told me—" he almost broke down—"that it was too late—that you were promised to him—I did not wrong you by the thought that—that your father——"

She hung her head, and his face darkened.

"And I was right," he muttered, very hoarsely.

"It was not only that," she said, with a shudder. "It was—oh! how can I tell you?"

"Tell me!" he pleaded. "I must know! It is too late now for reservations, you and I have said too much. I must know why you did this thing!"

"It was you!" she faltered.

"I?" and he stared down at her almost incredulously.

"Yes," she said, with wild desperation, for what could it matter whether she told him or not?—"I—I saw you, when you left me, from the terrace; there was another girl on your arm—one worthier than I, doubtless."

"Nellie!—poor Nellie!" he exclaimed. "And you thought—oh! Heaven forgive you!—you thought that I was base enough to deceive you, so vile as to pour out my heart to you one moment, and——"

He stopped, and something like a sob broke from his lips.

She looked up, frightened by the signs of his agony.

"Oh, forgive me!" she pleaded, holding out her hand to him. "Forgive me!"

"You thought that I was such a monster of treachery!—and it was that that tempted and drove you to marry him!"

She hung her head, and sat bowed down by despair and shame.

"This poor child,—of whom I have never thought but as of a sister! Oh, Kate, Kate! —what have you done?" and he drew a little away from her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A PROMISING young physician of this city relates a story at his own expense. He is small in stature, but large in attainments, and recognized as one of the rising practitioners of the city. The other night a lady residing near his office who has heart trouble was suddenly taken very ill and a servant was dispatched for her regular physician, who lived a some distance. Fearing he might not be in, another servant was sent to the young doctor's office, and hastened with him to her mistress. Great was the surprise of the man of medicine, however, when Katy, casting a disdainful glance at him, turned to the mistress and in excited tones remarked: "Yer pardon, mum, but this" (pointing to the doctor) "was the only thing I could find."

A LECTURER upon the rhinoceros prefaced his discourse with, "I must beg you to give me your undivided attention; indeed, it is absolutely impossible that you could form a true idea of the hideous animal of which we are about to speak unless you keep your eyes fixed on me!"

FADED FLOWERS.

BY G. F.

I see the sun shine bright once more
Where on the ledge the breakers leap,
Green grass that girds a shingly shore;
White gulls that wing an azure deep.

Ah! was it mine indeed that day
To dream with thee those golden hours?
O golden sand that glides away!
O gleam of sunlight on the showers!

O passing gleam! O vanished hour!
And what to me may still remain?
This little spray-dashed, faded flower;
A past delight, a present pain.

ONLY A VIOLET.

BY D. G. H.

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT same afternoon, an hour or two before the tete-a-tete between Lady Bruce, the beautiful heiress, Sybil Hurst, was pacing up and down one of the sheltered walks in the picturesque grounds, leaning on the arm of a gentleman who regarded her with most ardent admiration, and who was not her promised husband.

"Believe me," spoke the young man's honeyed tones, "he is not worthy of you; he seeks you for your fortune, not yourself. Keith Durant at this very moment is passionately in love with another!"

Miss Hurst had no devoted attachment for her cousin. Her motives for accepting him we know already.

Sybil loved her own way, and thought she would enjoy great freedom as her cousin's wife, but dearer even to her than liberty was her self-love.

She could not brook a slight to her vanity: she was quite content that Keith should not trouble her with demonstrations of affection so long as she believed him indifferent to all her sex, but she would not brook the bare idea of a rival in his heart.

She smiled a little scornfully as Herbert Moselle made his charge.

"You don't understand Mr. Durant," she said, lightly. "His is not an ardent nature. It is not in him to love passionately. The affection which he gives me is the strongest feeling he can show."

Mr. Moselle smiled.

"You are easily deceived, Miss Hurst!"

"I am not in the least deceived. You cannot mention any girl to whom my cousin has ever shown attention. He is emphatically indifferent to ladies!"

"May I ask you one question, Miss Hurst!"

"Half-a-dozen if you like."

"And you will answer them?"

"Yes."

"Even though it goes against your theory?"

"Yes."

"I think one question will suffice. Did you ever give your cousin a violet?"

"I never gave Keith a flower in my life. Mr. Moselle, you won't understand me. I keep telling you we are not a sentimental couple. Why can't you believe me?"

"You never gave Mr. Durant a flower, and yet I saw him only yesterday press a faded violet passionately to his lips!"

"You saw him?"

"It was in the library. I don't believe he had any idea I was there. He stood by the fire, and seemed about to burn something. It was just a faded flower. One time he held it over the flames, but his resolution failed him. He pressed it, as I told you, passionately to his lips, and replaced it in his pocket-book!"

Sybil's voice changed. It sounded very harsh.

"How am I to believe this?"

"I will swear it. If you need proof ask Mr. Durant yourself! Why, he holds violets dearer than other flowers!"

"I think I will."

"You will not betray me?"

She shook her head.

"And, Miss Hurst, when you have proved the truth of my words, will you remember that while life lasts I shall be your slave?"

Fortune favored Sybil. She met Keith as she was walking alone towards the house.

"Where are you going?"

"For a loiter in the grounds. Will you come with me, Sybil?"

Miss Hurst agreed, and led the way to the place where the violets grew—the very spot where Lord Ogilvie had met Molly and the children that morning.

"Pick me some violets please, Keith! I want to wear some to-night in my hair."

Mr. Durant hesitated.

"Don't wear such stupid things, Sybil!" he said, quickly. "Come with me to the conservatory, and I will find you something better worth the honor of appearing in your hair."

"I want violets."

But he did not attempt to pick them. Stooping down, she gathered a few, and held them towards him.

"Don't they smell delicious!"

But Keith was deadly pale.

"Sybil, I don't often have a fancy, but I can't bear violets. Their very perfume makes me feel ill!"

She turned on him with a mocking laugh.

"Your sentiments have changed lately, haven't they, Mr. Durant?"

"I don't understand you."

"You did not always object to violets, since you carry a faded one near your heart!"

Keith started.

"Who has dared——"

"Don't get into a passion," said his cousin calmly. "When we two agreed to be engaged, I believe I told you I did not believe in romantic sentiment?"

"I believe you did."

"But though I do not expect such a feeling for myself, I strongly object to your cherishing it for another. Answer me, once for all. When you told me you could offer me no rapturous devotion was it because you had already exhausted the feeling?"

"Sybil!"

Sybil dashed the violets from her hands, and stood before him with flashing eyes.

"I will be answered. Before you did me the honor to propose to share my fortune, had you bestowed your heart upon another?"

"When I asked you to marry me there was no woman in the world I would rather have made my wife, but after your taunt about your fortune——"

She interrupted him.

"I am not going to bear the imputation of having been jilted, sir. You shall not have the satisfaction of taking the initiative. From this moment our engagement is at an end! You understand? I distinctly refuse to be married for my money, and from to-day I am free! My grandfather is going to London by the night mail. I shall accompany him, and place myself under your mother's care. You can give whatever explanation of our rupture you please. You will hardly venture on the true one—that I discovered the real reason of your wish to marry me!"

She swept past him, leaving Keith with but one sentiment—relief.

At last he was free. He had no longer to act a part.

He went in search of Lord Ogilvie, and told him briefly Sybil had broken off the engagement, and wished to return with him to London.

The Earl took the news so cheerfully that he was relieved.

"I thought you would have been sorry?"

"I am very thankful," said the Earl "There is only one thing troubles me. Are you quite sure the rupture came from Sybil?"

"I am positive! She admits it herself. She says I shall not have the satisfaction of saying I jilted her."

"Thank Heaven!"

Keith began to think his grandfather was going out of his mind, but Lord Ogilvie smiled reassuringly.

"I loved her mother dearly, Keith; and her father was like a son to me, but I never took to Sybil. I have grieved for years to think she must be mistress of Ogilvie!"

Keith smiled sadly.

"She will still be that!"

"And you regret it?"

"No," said Keith, thankfully. "Grandfather, I had found out my engagement was a great mistake, and feel very grateful to Sybil for ending it! A man should never marry a wife richer than himself."

Lord Ogilvie laughed.

"Don't say that, please, Keith, for I rather think I am going to turn matchmaker. Your mother's schemes have failed so signally that it seems time I tried to find you a wife!"

"I shall never marry, my lord!"

Mr. Durant contrived to explain the change in his circumstances to Lord Bruce before dinner.

The Marquis smiled.

"If you ask my opinion, Durant, you are to be congratulated. I never cared much for heiresses, and, after knowing Miss Hurst, shall care still less in future."

"And you think the rupture need cause no change in my plans?"

"I think I shall be just as glad to have you here a disengaged man as with the title of Miss Hurst's fiance? I'll announce the fact for you. And as the young lady is leaving, really I can't see any need for your visit being curtailed."

"But Lady Bruce?"

Evelyn's husband smiled.

"To tell you a secret, my wife never liked your cousin, so I don't think you need fear her being hard on you."

Keith looked perplexed.

"Until I came here this time I always flattered myself I was a favorite with the Marchioness, but I fear now I have offended her. She always avoids talking to me."

"Nonsense!"

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTMAS Eve! Lord Ogilvie had had his interview with Lady Alice Durant, and told her, briefly, the engagement between the cousins was over. Then, in a strange, hoarse tone, he asked—

"Why did you deceive me all these years, Alice? You nursed James in his last illness? You knew he left a little child?"

"You never asked me," said Lady Alice, sullenly. "I told you his wife was dead; and she did die a year later."

"And left a child?"

Lady Alice shifted her ground.

"What made you think so?"

"Only that I saw a girl with Jim's eyes, who told me her name was Lester. Stop!" for Lady Alice seemed about to interrupt him: "I have every proof! She has been brought up as the niece of lawyer Cameron, of Netherton: and I remember perfectly well that the girl for whose sake Jim left home and friends was called Mary Cameron. I have the certificate of their marriage in my desk."

"I thought the child was a boy?" said Alice, in a strange, subdued tone. "It was for Keith's sake I did it. A boy would have stood for ever between him and Ogilvie!"

The look in her father's eyes made her ashamed, but he only said:

"Tell me all;"

"You know I was away at the time of James's leaving home. I never heard his wife's maiden name, or where she came from. His ravings in his last hours made you think she was dead. I knew better. I felt from the very way he tried to cling to life she was yet alive. I found an address in his pocket-book; and when he was buried I went there and secretly made inquiries. I bribed the landlady well, and she admitted there was a child—a strong, healthy child of a year old. The mother was but sickly, she said, but the child was likely to live."

"And she told you it was a boy?"

"No; but Jim seemed to speak of a boy. Perhaps the fear I was in made me take up the idea!"

"And you let mother and child risk starvation?"

"I told the landlady to let me know if ever anything happened. A year later she sent me word the widow was dead. I never knew the name she went by!"

"Jim married her in his own name, but she was known only as Mrs. Lester. Oh, Alice! your cruel ambition has well-nigh wrecked your son's life, and has blighted mine for eighteen years."

"I did it for Keith's sake."

"And nearly drove him into a marriage he detested! You do not know your son as I do. There is not one fibre of love for Sybil Hurst in his heart; and yet, if this disclosure had come out while she was engaged to him, he would have clung to her as faithfully as though she had been his own choice."

"And—what do you mean to do?"

"I shall return to Woodside for Christmas, as I promised the Marchioness; but I shall write to Mr. Cameron. In a very short time I expect my grandchild will be acknowledged publicly as the Honorable Mary Tempest, and installed as mistress of my home."

"As mistress?"

Lord Ogilvie looked at her sternly.

"I will make an ample allowance for your wants, Alice, and you and Sybil can make a home together."

"You mean we shall be exiled from Ogilvie?"

"I mean I cannot forget that for eighteen years you have left my boy's child to grow up in poverty and hardship. Had I found her an ignorant servant girl, instead of a high-bred maiden, it would have been your need. You know how I mourned for Jim, and yet you would not give me the comfort of ministering to his child!"

"My poor, dear Sybil."

"Your 'poor, dear Sybil will mourn her loss of wealth I daresay. You had better consult her as to the choice of a home."

A very dull red flush edged the widow's cheek.

"Is this girl known as Molly Lester? Is her uncle a lawyer at Netherton?"

"Yes."

Lady Alice groaned.

"Then fate has been hard indeed. But for my prudence she would now be Keith's wife."

"What do you mean?"

"That he was in love with her, and asked me to consult you about it. I took advantage of his illness to settle the matter to my satisfaction."

* * * * * *

It was Christmas Eve, and there was to be a dance at Woodside. Lady Bruce insisted on Molly being present.

"You know, dear," she urged, "Keith has been as much deceived as you, and he is free now."

Molly blushed scarlet.

"But——"

"I am not asking you to tell him how mistaken you have both been. All I want is for you to meet."

"Won't it look as if I wanted him to—to like me?"

"I fancy he has never left off doing that," said Lady Bruce, quietly. "Now, Molly, I mean to have my own way."

She had herself prepared a dress for her little friend—much such another simple toilet as the one of last year; only this time, instead of snowdrops, long sprays of trailing ivy were twined with the sweet purple violets.

"I like ivy," said the Marchioness. "It means fidelity. Molly, you look charming; I hope this will be a happy Christmas Day."

She would dearly have liked to tell Mr. Durant how he was mistaken, but this seemed beyond her powers.

It was no formal ball, just a carpet dance, beginning very soon after dinner, and she did manage to say to Keith at that repast—

"I want you to do me a favor!"

"What can it be?"

"I have persuaded the children's governess to come down to-night, and she knows no one. I want you to dance with her."

He smiled.

"With pleasure; but I warn you I am no amusing companion for a learned lady!"

Lady Bruce laughed.

"Molly is not a learned lady, only a pretty child. Aunt Allonby sent her to me last spring, and we all love her dearly."

"Lady Bruce, can you be speaking of Miss Lester?"

"Why not!"

"I thought—I believed she had married Sir Lewis Allonby?"

"Why, Lewis is in Egypt!"

"I suppose it was broken off."

"The engagement never existed. I fancy—this is just my own suspicion, I have never breathed it even to Molly—I fancy Lewis would have asked nothing better than to win our Molly."

"And he has twenty thousand a year."

"Well, you know all girls are not mercenary. Molly always says she shall never marry at all. Bruce and I think her far too pretty for an old maid. If you will dance with her, get one of the children to introduce you."

But Keith knew a better plan. Blanche confided to him Miss Molly was ready dressed, waiting in the schoolroom till they went to fetch her, and Mr. Durant determined to do the fetching himself. He knew where the schoolroom was.

Miss Molly was sitting in the firelight, thinking a little sadly of the difference between this dance and her first ball, when someone came slowly in, and, closing the door, stood watching her—a strange tumult of hope and fear contending for the mastery at his heart.

"Molly!"

"Keith!"

Only that, and yet both felt the gulf between them was gone.

"Why did you write that cruel letter, Molly?"

"How else could I possibly answer yours?"

"I never wrote to you in all my whole life!"

And word for word she repeated the cruel lines that had gone near to break her heart.

"And you believed I wrote it?"

"I believed it till three days ago!"

"And then?"

"I heard at the very time I received it you were dangerously ill!"

"Ay, hovering between life and death. I wished death had gained the battle, Molly, when I had your note!"

Molly was crying to herself.

"You must have thought me an ignoble creature," he said, passionately. "Where was your faith?"

She looked at him with a world of tenderness in her brown eyes.

"I thought you had mistaken your own feelings?"

"Molly, I have never ceased from loving you, not for a single day!"

"And yet——"

"And yet I engaged myself to another. Molly, I thought you had married Lewis Allonby. My heart was sore at your desertion, and I don't think I cared what became of me. I never cared for Sybil."

"Then you treated her very cruelly."

"I don't think so. Anyway, Molly, she gave me my freedom."

"But she will forgive you?"

"I really have no intention of asking her!"

"Lovers quarrels are always made up again," returned Molly, quietly.

"I am very glad to hear it," and there was a gleam of triumph in his eyes, "but that hardly affects me and Sybil. We may have been engaged, but we were certainly not lovers."

Molly picked a flower to pieces, her face cast down, for she could not meet the loving glance of Keith's.

"Molly!"

"You will be wanted downstairs, Mr. Durant. Lady Bruce relies on you for dancing."

"Lady Bruce asked me to dance with you, and I mean to presently. Molly, do you know what gave me my freedom?"

"No."

He showed her the little faded violet.

"It has been a magic talisman, Molly. You gave it me the first time we met; and even while I thought you another's I could never part with it."

"But Miss Hurst?"

"I cannot tell how she guessed it or whether it was but an idle fancy. I objected to gather violets for her. I never can look at them without thinking of you, and I could not bear the idea of gathering them for her. I told her I would choose her any other flowers, but not violets. She declared my feelings had changed. I must have admired violets once, since I carried a faded one near my heart."

"She will forgive you."

"Only I shall not ask her. Molly, you are treating me very badly!"

"I!"

"We have been engaged nearly a year," said Keith, gravely. "You know I belonged to you before ever I spoke to Sybil. My darling! but for believing you faithless I should have been loyal to you in word as I have been in heart. Molly, can't you forgive me, and let things be as they once were!"

"But your grandfather?"

"Molly, I won't hear of anyone but ourselves. I won't take 'No' for an answer unless you tell me you have ceased to love me!"

And as Molly did not attempt to utter such a gigantic falsehood, Keith's arms were round her the next moment, and her bowed head rested happily on his shoulder.

"And you are quite prepared to be a poor man's wife, Miss Molly, and to have nasty people say I married you out of spite because the heiress jilted me?"

"Quite."

"Molly! I pity Lewis Allonby, for I believe he loved you too."

"I saw you first," she whispered.

"Well, as soon as Christmas is over, I shall go and tell Mr. Cameron the story I wished to tell ten months ago. I hope he will be a merciful guardian, Miss Molly, since until you come of age you are under his authority."

"She is under nobody's authority but mine," said Lord Ogilvie, who had entered unperceived, and taken in the state of things with a glance. "If you wish to marry my granddaughter, young sir, it is me you have to reckon with!"

"Your granddaughter!"

The Earl smiled at their amazement.

"The world must know her as Molly Lester a little longer, but in a few weeks I hope she will take her place as Mary Lester Tempest, my son Jim's only child, Keith;" and his eyes glistened. "Unless you jilt the poor child, you will have to marry an heiress after all."

Keith and Molly looked at each other in amazement as the truth flashed came slowly home to them.

Lord Ogilvie stood behind them, his white hand resting on the soft, brown head.

"Keith, I know the story of the past better than you think for, and I feel you have both suffered enough. I would gladly have kept Jim's child as my very own, but I will yield her up to you a Christmas gift!"

* * * * * *

Some time in April there was a simple wedding in Ogilvie village church. The bride was a great heiress, the groom a man of narrow means, who had not long since been engaged to another.

Yet none who looked at the perfect love and trust stamped on the two young faces could have doubted this was one of the marriages made in Heaven—a union of hearts, not hands!

The years have rolled on since that wedding-day. Lewis Allonby has returned to the Towers, and now sits for the county. Miss Hurst married Herbert Moselle, and —report goes—made him repent his bargain.

Lady Alice, penitent and forgiven, visits her relations at Ogilvie Castle; and then, too, Uncle John, his wife, and the girls, have been made happy by appearing as guests.

But the friend most welcome there to Lord Ogilvie and his grandchildren is Evelyn Lady Bruce.

She it was who stood godmother to Molly's firstborn child—a little daughter—who received no old time honored family name, but was called Violet, in memory of the flower so linked with her mother's love-story.

And stored away among Keith's most valued treasures there rests a faded flower. To careless eyes it may seem "Only a Violet," but to Mr. Durant's mind becomes to it the most precious of his blessings—his much-loved wife. He will never forget now, in the winter firelight, he heard his grandfather's voice declare—

"I yield her up to you—A Christmas Gift."

[THE END.]

Too Late!

BY T. L. P.

"WILL you go away, and let me die in peace?"

"No! I will not go away, and you cannot die in peace while your iniquitous will exists. Destroy that, make one that gives Mary her rightful inheritance, and I will go away, to the other end of the world if you will."

"And leave me to the servants?"

"Not unless you desire it. Uncle Hugh: dear, dear uncle, do please listen to me!"

"How can I help it? Here you have me, nailed to my armchair, unable to leave it, and you keep up one eternal song that is never out of my ears."

"Because I cannot take what you would give me; and Mary will never take it from me. You have no right to will it to me. It is hers."

"Hers, indeed! It is mine!"

"But how did it become yours? Your wife, Mary's mother, left you her entire fortune. Do you suppose she would have done so if she had not trusted you so entirely to do what was right for her child?"

"Mary had no business to marry a man I hate."

"Yes, she had, if he was a man she loved."

"I hate him," was the fierce reply, "as I hated his father years ago. You ask me too much, Robert, when you ask me to make a rich man of Stephen Hallett's son. You do not understand how for years that man, my trusted, confidential friend, was using my faith in him to undermine my business and work my ruin, because—the woman he loved loved me. Had I guessed that it was his son Mary would meet at her Aunt Maria's, I would never have consented to her going to Birmingham. And when it was too late to influence her, I gave her the choice between Walter Hallett and her father, and she made her own selection."

"But tyranny should not go beyond the grave. You may live for years, but I beg you to let your anger die when you do. It cannot harm you, in the grave, to let even Stephen Hallett's son have the money that ought by every right to be Mary's."

"I will not! I never will! Go away!"

He was so fierce, so excited, that Robert obeyed him, and went to his own room.

He was not a young man—something over forty—this champion of his cousin's right, neither was he a rich man, although so anxious to throw away a handsome legacy.

But he was a good man, one who went over to the Highest for strength and guidance; and he loved his cousin with the love that is the stronger if it comes late in life.

He had hoped his love was returned, for the pretty winning maiden of ten years before, then just stepping from girlhood to womanhood, had given him the frank, tender affection of a sister.

But another had won Mary Bradley's heart, and while her father raved over her infatuation for her lover, Robert wakened from his dream of happiness.

It was the story so often told, of a child who, having had every whim gratified from infancy, having been spoiled, petted, indulged in the most trifling wish, is suddenly crossed in the strongest desire of her life.

That her father should say "no" to her never entered Mary Bradley's mind, until she read the furious reply that answered Walter Hallett's manly letter of love and request for a father's sanction to his engagement.

It had been many years since the breach between Hugh Bradley and Stephen Hallett, and the young man knew nothing of any former intimacy.

The grave had closed over his father while he was but a child, and no record of the friendship betrayed had come to him.

If it had, he would have been told the other side of the story, that Bradley had won away Stephen Hallett's promised wife, for she was actually engaged to Stephen, when her heart turned traitor to her word, and her love was given to Hugh Bradley.

Then, in hot revenge, the deserted lover used the confidence reposed in him, and brought pecuniary ruin on his old friend, so crippling him that he lost courage, and was willing, when his debts were paid, to give up all business and live on his wife's income.

And not until Mary had given her love past recall was the old wrong brought forward to hurl at her lover.

They were young, in love, hopeful of forgiveness, and so one sunshiny morning they stepped through the open church door, and came out, man and wife.

It may have been, had Hugh Bradley interfered a little sooner, he might have gained his will.

But when he told his daughter to make her choice between her father and her lover, that lover had been Mary's husband for a week, and no thought of leaving him was possible.

Her father went abroad, not returning until an incurable disease sent him home to die.

Robert Bradley answered his letter, imploring him to come and live with him, in person, nursed him faithfully, gave him a son's devotion, and never ceased importuning him to alter the will that made his daughter penniless and enriched his nephew.

Only a few weeks had passed since the old home had been made ready for its master, but in those weeks the disease that had been progressing slowly, made swifter advances towards the end, and both men knew that before long the old home must have a new master.

Should that master be Robert Bradley or Walter Hallett?

The old man who must decide that sat where his nephew had left him, deep in painful thought.

He must die! That he knew, for there could be no self-deception there. Die, and leave his only child to starve! What was it Robert had told him?

"I have had letters telling me that Walter Hallett is a hopeless invalid, crippled by a railway accident, and Mary supports him by giving music lessons. Mary, delicate, used to luxury, tramps about in all kinds of weather, going to her pupils coming home to nurse and comfort her husband, and do the drudgery of their poor home. She will not accept charity, and she has never forgiven me for urging her not to marry against your will. So she struggles on as she best can. Three children lie in their coffins who might have lived with proper food and clothing. Uncle Hugh, do not take two murders on your soul, I pray you! They will die if you do not relent!"

That was what Robert had said. The invalid reached out his arm and opened a drawer in the desk beside him.

It opened reluctantly, as if it had been long closed, and inside lay a bundle of letters.

What made him read them? It was years since the tiny child's hand had penned that "Dear papa" that stretched in uneven lines half across the sheet.

Only a few lines in each letter, written when the child was in the country with an aunt.

But the few lines all bore the same burden of childish distress.

"It is nice here, but I want to come home to my dear papa." Or, "Please, please, papa, come here to Mary, or let me come home to you."

He read them all; but the last one was in the free, flowing hand of a woman, and it told the story of that other love, stronger than that of child or parent.

But there was no anger in Hugh Bradley's face as he read, only a white terror, as if he feared his hour too brief for his work.

He drew up a sheet of paper within reach, and wrote his will again—very brief, very plain.

Everything was left to his daughter, and in case of her death without children, to his nephew, Robert Bradley.

As the invalid signed his name, his physician came in, and one look at his patient's face brought him quickly across the room.

"Don't mind me," Mr. Bradley whispered, the beads of perspiration starting on his forehead. "Sign that as witness. Ring for a servant to sign. Quick!—quick! There is no time to lose!"

A quick jerk of the bell brought a servant and Robert, and the invalid gasped out the few words:

"Sign—my will—my signature—you are witnesses."

Then, hours of great agony, ending in death.

It was a week later when Robert Bradley stood at the door of a lodging house in one of the poorest streets in Westminster, listening to a woman, who was speaking rapidly but not without feeling.

"Yes, sir, a telegram came for Mrs. Hallett, but it was on the day she buried her husband. Yes, sir, he died, and suffered more than tongue can tell. She had to give up her teaching, and she's sold everything she could turn into money. She read the telegram, and she smiled—it was just awful, sir, that smile—and whispered, 'too late!' And she scarcely speaks, but sits there with her hands in her lap. Sometimes I can coax her to bed, sometimes she only shakes her head, and it's the same about eating. If I put a cup of soup to her lips, she drinks it; but she's just dying of grief, sir. I hope you are some kin to her, sir, that can see to her being cared for. I do the best I can, but I've a big family and the house full of lodgers. I cannot do much for her, poor thing."

"I am her cousin. Will you see if I may go to her?"

The woman nodded, and went up the narrow staircase, Robert Bradley following her more slowly. He had given up his inheritance.

He had conquered the love of his life. What was to be his reward? He answered the question at once.

His reward was to be the comfort and happiness of his cousin Mary. But could happiness come to her after such sorrow?

Again the answer came very slowly: "Time will heal even that wound, and I love her."

But when he stood in the narrow entry, waiting for the summons to enter his cousin's room, there came to him a cry of horror:

"Come! Oh, come quickly!"

And, obeying the summons, he saw in one agonized look that happiness had come to Mary in death.

She had gone to the husband for whose sake she had given up everything, and on the cold, pale lips was a smile of perfect rest and peace.

He had done all that he could, but too late!

HOW THREAD IS NUMBERED.—Everybody knows the size of thread. Every seamstress knows whether she wants No. 30 or 60 or 120, and knows, when she hears the number, about what is the size of the strand referred to; but how the numbers happen to be what they are, and just what they mean, not one person in a thousand knows.

And yet it is a simple matter to explain, was the information accorded a reporter by an employee of one of the largest spool cotton manufactories in the United States. When 840 yards of yarn weigh 7000 grains, a pound of cotton, the yarn is No. 1. If 1680 yards weigh a pound it will be No. 2 yarn. For No. 50 yarn it would take 50 multiplied by 840 yards to weigh a pound. This is the whole of the yarn measurement.

The early manufactured thread was three cord, and the thread took its number from the number of the yarn from which it was made. No. 60 yarn made No. 60 thread, though in point of fact the actual calibre of No. 60 thread would equal No. 20 yarn, being three 60 strands.

When the sewing machine came into the market as the great consumer, unreasoning in its work and inexorable in its demands for mechanical accuracy, six cord cotton had to be made as a smoother product.

As thread numbers were already established, they were not altered for the new article, and No. 60 six cord and No. 60 three cord are identical in size as well as in number. To effect this the six cord has to be made of yarn twice as firm as that demanded by the three cord.

The No. 60 six cord would be six strands of No. 120 yarn. Three-cord spool cotton is the same number as the yarn it is made of. Six-cord spool cotton is made of yarn that is double its number. As simple a thing as thread is, there are 2000 different kinds made.

"You have my decision, Clara," he said; "I cannot walk with you if you have the poodle with you. You must choose between him and me. It rests with you if our engagement shall be broken." "Oh, George!" the girl replied; "it's so sudden. You must give me a week to think it over. One week, George, and you shall receive your answer."

Scientific and Useful.

ELECTRICITY.—Mechanical and electrical engineering experts predict that the cable system of operating street passenger railways will be supplanted by electricity within five years.

RUBBER PAVEMENTS. — Experiments have been made in Berlin with India rubber pavements. It is said to be very durable, of course noiseless, and unaffected by heat or cold. As a covering for bridges it is said to have peculiar merits, its elasticity preventing vibration.

MILK JELLY.—The following recipe for making milk jelly, a diet for invalids, is given by a contemporary. Heat a quart of milk with a pound of sugar, and after the latter is dissolved, continue heating at a boiling temperature for ten minutes. Then cool it well and add, slowly stirring, a solution of one ounce of gelatine in a cupful of water. Next add the juice of three or four lemons, and three wine-glassfuls of wine, brandy, or other liquor. Stand the glasses containing the mixture in a cold place to set the jelly. The milk must be quite cold before the other ingredients are added, in case it should curdle.

CARE OF THE HEALTH.—Never take warm drinks and then immediately go out into the cold. Keep the back, especially between the shoulder blades, well covered; also the chest well protected. In sleeping in a cold room establish a habit of breathing through the nose, and never with the mouth open. Never go to bed with damp or cold feet. After exercise of any kind never ride in an open carriage or near the window of a car for a moment; it is dangerous to health and even life. When hoarse speak as little as possible until the hoarseness is recovered from, else the voice may be permanently lost or difficulties of the throat be produced.

A NEW CEMENT.—The cement by which many stone buildings in Paris have been renovated is likely to prove useful in repairing the foundations for machinery. The powder which forms the basis of the cement is composed of two parts oxide of zinc, two of crushed hard limestone and one of pulverized grit, together with a certain proportion of ochre as a coloring agent. The liquid with which this powder is to be mixed consists of a saturated solution of six parts of zinc in commercial muriatic acid, to which is added one part of sal-ammoniac; this solution is diluted with two-thirds of its volume of water. A mixture of one pound of the powder to two and one-half pints of the liquid forms a cement which hardens quickly and is of great strength.

Farm and Garden.

WAGONS.—A low wheeled wagon is of heavier draught than the high wheeled vehicle, but for hauling short distances the former is preferred by many owing to the ease with which it can be loaded.

THE CELLAR.—Do not be afraid to open the doors and windows of the cellar on clear days. It is much better to have pure air in the cellar than to keep it too close and damp. When the cellar is musty and a disagreeable odor noticed the entire house is likewise affected.

THE FARMER'S SON.—Every farmer's son should be educated to a knowledge of botany and also to thoroughly understand all the points of the different breeds of stock, as well as be familiar with the nature of fertilizers and their fitness for certain crops and soils.

PAY A PROFIT.—A farm must not only be self supporting, but should pay a profit. When the farmer reaches that stage when he is compelled to borrow, or depend on some income from another source, his farm is unprofitable, and he should then endeavor not only to discover the cause of the loss but also aim to improve in some manner, in order that the farm may be self-supporting.

HOTBEDS.—Hotbeds should be well aired, by raising the sash, on warm days, but they should be well covered and protected at night. The temperature can be kept within a few degrees of the point required by keeping a close watch and giving care to the hotbeds. Fresh horse manure is best to use for creating the warmth. It is not too soon to make the frames and have everything ready for beginning the hotbeds.

EXCESS OF WATER.—The most disagreeable thing on the farm in winter is mud, and although it cannot be entirely avoided, yet some of its disadvantages may be overcome by carefully draining every location that allows an access of water to accumulate. When the cattle are compelled to stand knee-deep in mud there is a loss of animal heat, and a greater proportion of food will be required to keep them in condition.

FOOD AND WATER.—Freezing of the food and water will be one of the difficulties this winter as usual. The troughs become ice-bound and the soft food freezes rapidly when the weather is severe. In such cases it is better to water the stock at intervals rather than to keep water in the troughs. If you have no arrangement for warming water, try the plan of a Western farmer, who heats stones and drops one in the trough when the water is pumped in. It is better, however, to warm the water, using a boiler or steam pipe, and if there is a large number of animals it will pay to do so.

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TO FRIENDS AND READERS.

We hope that those of our friends and readers who are kindly in the habit of getting up clubs for THE POST, will enter the field as soon as possible this year and try at least to double their old lists. We also hope our readers who have not heretofore sent us a club will try to do so now.

We wish to get a great many more clubs for this year, and trust every one of our present subscribers will make an extra effort to secure one or more new friends for us.

THE POST is much lower in price than any other first class family paper in the country, and we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands to whom it may still be a stranger, save, perhaps, by reputation. Of course we must depend in a great degree upon our present subscribers, friends and readers to show THE POST to their acquaintances and neighbors, and to speak a good word in our behalf. Their return for such efforts must be the pleasure they give to others, the consciousness of assisting in the good work of circulating THE POST, and enabling us to make it better, more useful and entertaining than ever before. Will they try and do it for us? Let each of our present friends and subscribers try to get one new subscriber at least.

Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

The Other Side.

The Duke of Wellington is reported to have said that the art of war largely consists in correctly guessing "what is on the other side of the hill."

We do not know whether he was thinking of the physical conformation of the country, in valley and river and plain, or of the number and disposition of the foes concealed by the intervening elevation. Perhaps both. In either sense the saying is applicable to the warfare of life.

The mysterious success of some business men, and the equally mysterious failure of others as honest and industrious and capable as they, depend on this faculty of correct guessing at "what is on the other side of the hill"—a faculty which resolves itself mainly into observation and inference, aided by experience.

Can this be cultivated? Unquestionably. No doubt the Indian of our childhood was partly a manufactured article from the brain of story-writers; but we suppose he was partly genuine, and that his remarkable dexterity in following up trails was not the invention of the novelist.

How did he succeed where the white man would fail? Simply by trained observation. Observation depends upon voluntary attention, and that depends upon the interest felt in the object.

But the faculty may be cultivated in a mechanical way. Robert Houdin, the conjurer, used to train his little son by causing him to pass at an ordinary pace before a shop-front full of miscellaneous wares and then ascertaining how many articles he could specify.

By constant practice of this kind, remarkable proficiency may be attained in rapid cognition of a promiscuous assemblage of things flashed at once on the retina.

"What is on the other side of the hill?" is a question which, when put by children toiling up the mount of knowledge, and the still steeper ascent of moral self conquest, can receive a full answer, though it be not free from that solemn incertitude which besets the future of us all.

There is a large element of certainty in the contour of "the other side of the hill;" but can we make any safe calculations in the uncertain region of the actions, tempers, fortunes, of the other men and women whose lives will press against our own?

We may cast our own horoscope, so far as it is governed by our moral character in early life, our struggles and our conflicts, our victories and defeats; but the vast ocean of our uncertainty about the doings and failings of the crowd of other souls who will jostle us in our road seems at first glance somewhat terrifying.

There are many aids to good guessing—testimony of friends and relatives, known hereditary proclivities, manifest tastes and tendencies. Let us admit that the greatest sagacity cannot always foresee what is likely to happen; but very often bystanders, as they see the pair of lovers mount the hill and disappear on the other side, can hazard a not very wide conjecture as to what will be found there.

But there is one code, or index, of certainties about what is "on the other side of the hill" which we have not yet opened—namely, the steadfastness of the moral as well as the physical law.

No one expects that on the other side of a literal hill water will flow upwards, or the law of gravitation tamely accept any insult, or light be reflected at any other angle than the angle of incidence, or sound-waves alter their velocity of vibration, or any other fundamental decree be changed.

Yet there are people who seem to believe that on the other side of a metaphorical hill moral laws will be found entirely changed. Grapes will hang on thorns, and figs adorn thistles. Wild oats are to be sown, and the finest wheat reaped.

If on "this side of the hill" we firmly attach ourselves to some divine law or promise, the operation of which will not be exhausted on the journey, then we know what is on "the other side of the hill"—namely, the working out of that law, the fulfillment of that promise.

IF misfortunes have befallen you by your own misconduct, live, and be wiser for the future. If they have befallen you by the fault of others, live; you have done nothing wherewith to reproach yourself. If your character be unjustly attacked, live; time will remove the aspersion. If you have spiteful enemies, live, and disappoint their malevolence. If you have kind and faithful friends, live, to bless and protect them. If you have hope for immortality, live, and prepare to enjoy it.

MANNERS are of more importance than laws. Upon these, in a great measure, the laws depend. The law touches but here and there, now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and color to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they destroy them.

THE shortest and surest way to live with honor in the world is to be in reality what we would appear to be; and, if we observe, we shall find that all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the practice and experience of them.

WE think there is shame in doubt and ignorance, and we like better to decide at hazard, than to be conscious that we are not informed enough of things to give judgment. We are full of ignorance and errors; and nevertheless we are at the greatest trouble in the world to draw from the lips of men this confession, so just and so conformable to their natural condition: "I am mistaken, and know nothing."

EVERY man has at times in his mind the ideal of what he should be, but is not. This ideal may be high and complete, or it may be quite low and insufficient; yet, in all men that really seek to improve, it is better than the actual character. Perhaps no one is so satisfied with himself that he never wishes to be wiser, better and more holy.

MEDITATION is the tongue of the soul and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect—meditation being the soul of prayer and the intention of our spirit.

IT is no more possible for an idle man to keep together a certain stock of knowledge than it is possible to keep together a stock of ice exposed to the meridian sun. Every day destroys a fact, a relation, or an influence; and the only method of preserving the bulk and value of the pile is by constantly adding to it.

I HAVE great hope of a wicked man, slender hope of a mean one. A wicked man may be converted and become a prominent saint. A mean man ought to be converted six or seven times, one right after the other, to give him a fair start and put him on an equality with a bold, wicked man.

THE happiness of life is made up of minute fractions—the little soon-forgotten charities of a kiss, a smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment in the disguise of playful raillery, and the countless other infinitesimals of pleasant thought and feeling.

EVERY man ought to endeavor at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity.

HE that embarks in the voyage of life will always wish to advance, rather by the impulse of the wind, than the strokes of the oar; and many founder in their passage while they lie waiting for the gale.

NOTHING is so certain to bring genuine happy smiles to our own faces as to watch such smiles grow in those of others as the result of our sympathy, our gentle words, or helpful deeds.

IN all the affairs of human life, social as well as political, courtesies of a small and trivial character are the ones that strike deepest to the grateful and appreciating heart.

MAN of all ages have the same inclinations, over which reason exercises no control. Thus wherever men are found, there are follies, aye, and the same follies.

THE virtue of the soul does not consist in flying high, but walking orderly; its grandeur does not exercise itself in grandeur, but in mediocrity.

THE art of pleasing consists in being pleased. To be amiable is to be satisfied with one's self and others. Good-humor is essential to pleasantry.

GOOD NATURE is more agreeable in conversation than wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance which is far more suitable than beauty.

THERE is room for the exercise of charity everywhere—in business, in society, and in church; but first and chiefest is the need for it at home.

MANY persons criticise in order not to seem ignorant; they do not know that indulgence is a mark of the highest culture.

Difficulties are overcome by diligence.

The World's Happenings.

A Cree Indian cannot speak to his father-in-law for 11 years after marriage.

Buffaloes are to be bred on a stock farm in Minnesota for their fur and beef.

Three men over 80 years of age are employed in a factory in Taunton, Mass.

The weight of the heart is from 8 to 12 ounces, and it beats 100,000 times in 24 hours.

A single gold dollar can be made into a sheet that will carpet two rooms 16 feet square.

Southbridge, Mass., manufactured a million and a half pairs of spectacles the past year.

An amount of blood equal to the whole quantity in the body passes through the heart once every minute.

The skin contains more than 2 000 000 openings, which are the outlets of an equal number of sweat glands.

The horse of a doctor at Dover, Mo., though 36 years old, is strong and lively and performs good service.

Two Long Island City policemen are before the Police Board on the charge of stealing geese from a pedler's wagon.

When an infant, 54 years ago, Bernard Meyer, of Omaha, swallowed a needle, and it has just emerged from under his left shoulder.

John Lanfeldt, a Grand Rapids, Iowa, lad, wears four artificial limbs as a result of having been frost-bitten during the great blizzard.

There are 2800 members of the Michigan Anti-Horse Thief Society, and during the past year they have not had a cent's worth of property stolen.

The Talmud tells us that Adam was created, sinned and was cussed from Paradise on Friday. Mahomet, to prove his prophetic powers, declared the same.

Nebraska has its Paradise Valley, Milk River, Honey Creek, Thunder Canyon, Lightning Fork, Doughnut Prairie, Baker's Roof and Cake Basket precinct.

A North Carolina Justice of the Peace fined a citizen $5 for contempt of court in not bringing out a pail of water for the Justice's horses while he was traveling.

A law in Prussia provides that anybody carrying a stick or an umbrella in such a way as to be dangerous to other travelers, may be punished by fine or imprisonment.

It would seem that marriage is a failure in Sedgwick county, Kan., where last month more applications for divorce were filed than there were marriage licenses issued.

Joe Stremmer, of Stockton, Cal., a consumptive, called upon an undertaker and offered to shake dice with him for a coffin. The undertaker accepted the offer and lost.

A Boston literary genius invents names for books and plays, copyrights them and waits for bidders; his stock now consists of 72 titles, for one of which he was recently offered several hundred dollars.

A college of carpentry for women has been started in the old university town of Cambridge, England. It is intended not so much to teach the trade as to develop manual dexterity among women.

A Norwich, Conn., minister announced from the pulpit on a recent Sunday that he would give a dollar and a half if the young men in the gallery would take seats down stairs. They did so, and the money was paid.

The following are the figures showing the sizes of the European armies: Russia, 4,000,000; Germany, 2,500,000; France, 2,430 000, with perhaps 1,000,000 more if needed; Austria, 1,077,000; Italy, 2,400,000; Turkey, 300,000.

Schoolteacher McConnelly, of Andale, Kan., attempted the other day to chastise one of his pupils; but the boys rallied in force, felled McConnelly with a chair, and beat him badly, breaking his arm and fracturing his skull.

An interesting experiment, consisting of the loaning of books to passengers at a small fee, is to be tried on Austrian and Hungarian railways next spring. A deposit covering the cost of the work will be exacted from each reader.

A C Owen, aged 70 years, of Mason City, Iowa, is out with a challenge to any man of 70 in the United States, to run him a 40 or 80 rod race and at the end of the race jump and strike his heels together three times. It is said he will wager from $500 to $10,000 on the result.

A Dakota paper knows of three young women, who, at a dinner last December declared their intention never to marry, and agreed to dine together on the 13th of each December. Three honorary members have since been added to the "club." They are the girls' husbands, and all six met at dinner at the appointed time.

A peculiarly novel letter has just been sent by an inhabitant of Bath, England, to a friend at Trowbridge. It was written in short-hand on the back of a postage stamp, the address being in ordinary writing. The missive was dropped into the letter-box at the general postoffice and was duly delivered at its destination.

Boston policemen who searched a house for liquor, almost despaired of finding any, when one of them noticed a key hole in the piano leg. The key was demanded of the proprietor, and—to save the leg—was brought forth. The sham limb was unlocked and swung apart, when "as tidy a sideboard was brought to view as a toper could well wish to see."

The meanest man has again been discovered. He belongs in Claverack, Mass., and because his wife contributed $10 to a church building fund he attempted to hang himself, but was discovered and cut down. He was determined to put an end to the misery he experienced over the loss of his money, however, and later in the day he attempted to commit suicide by drowning, but was again rescued. Finally the church authorities decided to return the man the money, and he is happy.

IT NEVER DIES.

BY GRAZIA.

Ah! memory, why haunt me yet
With shadows of the past?
The thrilling hopes I'll ne'er forget,
That were too sweet to last.
The tender tones of that dear voice,
The look of those sweet eyes,
Can I forget or e'en rejoice
Aright beneath the skies?
Ah! not for time at last will prove
That true love never dies.

Rejoice! O ray of hope I will,
When those again I have—
The looks and tones, now cold and still,
In solitude I crave.
Let others dream I can forget
The light of those loved eyes;
But my heart cries, "I love you yet!
Though you now dwell in the skies."
It matters not, for heaven will prove
That true love never dies.

My Friend's Wife.

BY C. H. CHAMBERS.

I WISH, before relating this story, to anticipate the natural inquiries which I imagine will follow the reader's perusal of it. Thus: 1. Is the story true? Yes, I believe it is, as it was told to me by a friend whose word I have every reason to respect and believe, and who was, himself, one of the characters of the short history. 2. Do I believe in spiritualism? No: for the simple reason that I know nothing whatever about it, never having had, I must confess, either the energy or the curiosity to devote myself to a proper study of the subject.

I was never at a *seance* in my life, and no spirits or visible beings have ever rapped mysterious messages to me in my solitude.

So now to my story; or to be accurate and just, to the story of my friend, Mr. Wainton.

We had, through tortuous conversational windings, got on to the subject of spiritualism one evening, when my friend signified that apropos to that subject he had a tale to unfold.

Accordingly I made myself comfortable in an easy chair, lighted a fresh cigar, and remained expectantly silent while he began the following.

* * * * * * *

You must know that when I had fairly entered my twenties, spiritualism, as it is called, was the talk of the day, and spirit-rapping was, with a great many people, the favorite amusement of the hour.

I, being of an inquisitive and somewhat superstitious disposition, was bitten by the general craze, and very badly bitten I assure you.

I neglected all other amusements for the peculiarly exciting one of spirit-rapping, and as in my small circle of friends there were several who shared my enthusiasm, I had every opportunity of gratifying the singular taste.

Among those friends it is only necessary for me to mention three—George Hargraves his wife Grace, and her sister, Janet Carr. George was then my most intimate friend, as he would probably have remained to this day but that the decrees of fate took him to India to reside several years since, and few friendships can bear the test of such a wide and lengthy separation from each other.

Prolonged pen-and-ink intimacies are rare, as you have doubtless experienced; and as my active friendship with George is now a matter purely of retrospect, I am justified in speaking of it and him in the past tense.

No three people could have been more unlike than those I have named.

Hargraves was somewhat indolent and slightly superstitious, but of rather a sluggish intellect, and not of very refined sensibilities. Although unconsciously regardless of the feelings of others, however, he was frank and generous, and he was possessed of a strong vein of humor. He cultivated the spirits, to use his own irreverent expression, "for the fun of the thing."

Miss Carr, my friend's sister-in-law, was a little thin woman, rather pretty, with bright, restless eyes, and sharp features—not excepting that unseen but important member, the tongue.

She was deeply read for a young woman, and decidedly clever; and to tell the truth, I was a little afraid of her, as one is apt to be of a clever woman.

She regularly joined in our communings with the spirit-world in a business-like manner, and with what a contemporary statesman would call an "open and inquiring mind."

She professed to be an earnest seeker after the truth; particularly, I could not help suspecting, the truth about the other people.

Mrs. Hargraves was so unlike her sister in every respect, as to almost incline one to doubt the relationship. In person she was taller and much more beautiful than her sister.

Her features were very delicately moulded; her hair was of that light brown shade which is almost golden in sunlight; her complexion was clear to transparency; her form was very frail, and her eyes, which I purposely mention last because I remember them best, were large and grey and heavily fringed with dark lashes.

The eyelids had a way of dropping suddenly, in a manner which told eloquently of an exceedingly timid and retiring nature. You looked at Grace Hargraves and thought of a water-lily.

For the rest she was the most highly-strung woman I have ever met. In her, sensibility had life and motion.

Her nervousness was almost painful, until you knew her well and had gained her confidence. Then you found her to be a very charming woman, of a strangely poetic imagination.

For my part, I very much preferred Grace—as I, being an intimate friend, was privileged to call her—to her clever sister.

Hargraves, as you will readily imagine from what I have told you, did not understand his wife, although he was undoubtedly devotedly attached to her.

The comparative coarseness of his nature did not fit in very well with the exquisite refinement of hers; but she gave no sign that it was so, and I believe their married life was altogether happy.

It is scarcely necessary for me to tell you that Grace took no active part in our favorite pastime. She had not her sister's inquisitiveness.

And I think, too, that, holding as she did very orthodox views, she regarded the whole business as savoring of impiety; more especially as our devotions—if I may so call them for want of a better word—were attended with more amusement than solemnity.

But apart altogether from these considerations, her nerves were really much too delicately strung to admit of so severe a strain.

Accordingly, when the lights were turned down, and we who courted the spirit revelations gathered round the table, Grace always retired into the next room—which communicated with the one we occupied by folding doors—and passed the time with a book, or more generally at the piano.

She played very beautifully. She loved music. Her talent had been highly cultivated, and coupled with these advantages she had the most marvellous gift of expression I have ever with in a non-professional woman.

The intense feeling of which she was made up seemed to pass from her finger tips and endue the instrument with a noble poetic life.

Naturally enough, we liked Grace to play during our *seances*. It added a fresh charm to the mystic hour, and she was always willing to indulge us.

While we communed with the spirits, the old masters' most dreamy and suggestive compositions were eloquently interpreted within our hearing; but not infrequently the horrible incongruity occured of one of Beethoven's sonatas, or one of Mendelsohn's Songs without Words, being drowned in the laughter occasioned by an unexpected sentiment on the part of some lively spirit.

One evening—a memorable evening—our party at the table consisted of five, including Hargraves, Miss Carr and myself.

The spirits were in a phenomenally merry mood. Absurd joke after joke was perpetrated against each member of the party, and our laughter at last became so loud and frequent that Grace suddenly closed the piano, and declared from the next room that she would sacrifice music and herself on the altar of good nature no longer.

"Then come and join us, my dear," cried Hargraves, who was now in the highest spirits."

"No, thank you," we heard her reply.

"Well, just come to the door for one moment," implored her husband. "I want to speak to you."

She appeared at the door immediately, and stood looking into the dim-lighted room.

"What is it, George?"

"Do join us, Grace—only for a little while; and if you don't like it you can leave us again."

"Please don't ask me," replied Grace, evidently troubled that she felt obliged to refuse the request from her dear husband.

"You have no idea what you are missing, Mrs. Hargraves," remarked an enthusiastic lady next to me.

"I don't wish for an idea," was the only reply.

"Indeed, Grace, it is very foolish of you to isolate yourself," said her sister. "You not only lose considerable entertainment, but much profitable instruction. What is life without the pleasures and profits of investigation?"

"I don't envy you either the pleasure or the profit, Janet, and you should know by this time that I am not equal to a share in what you call investigation."

"I shouldn't urge her, George," I whispered to my friend; "I really don't think her nerves are equal to it. Remember the widow who fainted the other night when the presence of her late husband's shade was announced."

"Nonsense!" replied George, among whose small faults obstinacy was conspicuous. "People are nervous because they nurse and coddle their nerves; and, thank heaven, Grace has no defunct husband to fear a visitation from. The only way to dispel her nervousness is to show her how harmless the whole thing is. Grace, do come. The spirits are jovial to-night, and you will be amused."

Then, as she hesitated painfully—her love and obliging, complaint nature at war with her prejudices and fears—he added: "Only this once, dear, to please me."

Then she came, as I feared she would if he pressed the point; and feeling more vexation than I quite understood, I made room for her between Janet and myself.

As she laid her hand upon the table, I was conscious that she trembled, and I was sorely tempted to make some excuse for breaking up the meeting. Would I had done so!

"That's very good of you," said Hargraves, pleased to have secured his own way, "and in a few minutes you will be glad you have come, and sorry you have stayed away so long. Now understand, I am asking the questions in French—a language we all know pretty well—and I obtain answers in the same language by repeating aloud the alphabet, a rap being heard when I come to a letter required in the composition of the spirit's answer. Now, let us proceed."

Then, after a pause, he put this question to our invisible companions: "Have you any particular communication to make?"

The answer to Hargraves' question came promptly in three raps, which signified an affirmative.

"Is the communication you desire to make to be addressed to one of us particularly?"

The answer was again yes; and while the lady on my left tittered audibly in anticipation of another jest, I felt that Grace who was on my right, trembled more violently than before.

"Will you please intimate to which of us you refer?"

The answer this time was strangely expressed, but in a manner we were all familiar with. The table on which our hands rested, and which was small, and oval in shape, slowly tipped up, and one end of it, at which Grace was seated, declined almost into her lap.

I had, strangely enough, confidently expected this result: but I was none the less annoyed when it came. I believe we all expected that Grace would start up in agitation and leave the room; but she did not. She sat still and silent, without even withdrawing her hands from the table. I tried to see her face, but it was impossible to read its expression in the darkness. I felt sure, though, that she was colorless.

"We needn't go any further, George," I said. "I'm sure Grace can't stand it any longer."

"Oh, do let's go on," cried the lady on my left; "it's sure to be something funny."—And thereupon I hated her.

"Go on," said Grace, in a low voice.

I suppose that it is not in human nature to deliberately refuse hearing something about oneself, and so, for the moment, Grace's curiosity conquered her nervousness.

Then George proceeded to elicit the communication by the means I have described. These were the letters at which the rap arrested him—

LA MORT

The effect upon me, when the T completed the words, I shall never forget. It fell like an iron bolt upon my heart. Those fateful words to be directed against the youngest and fairest of our party! It was too horrible. I was by no means a "true believer," but I defy anyone under the circumstances, not to have felt impressed as I did.

For many moments we all sat chilled in silence, and then Hargraves burst into a laugh—not a natural laugh, but a discordant, affected one.

"What a very bad joke," he said, with a sorry attempt to speak lightly; "and what an old one. Pity they couldn't tell us something we didn't know before. Of course we shall all die some day. They insist upon that, because they've experienced the sensation themselves, I suppose."

Then, to my intense surprise, Grace said, with apparent calmness: "Ask them when, George."

I have often asked myself since, whether my friend was right in continuing that scene, and, the answer being no, I have condemned myself for not insisting upon closing it. But Hargraves probably argued, if more than I did, that opposing Grace's wishes would only result in leaving a deeper impression upon her mind; and we were doubtless, both animated by the thought that the prophecy was in keeping with the lively view of humor in which the spirits had comported themselves during the evening.

George obeyed his wife, seeking the required information in tones of assumed levity and indifference.

By the method he employed, some time was occupied in eliciting a reply, during which the tension upon the feelings of each of us—judging by myself—must have been painfully intense.

"*Within one year!*" was the substance of the spirits' reply.

When this second blighting message was delivered, another silence fell upon us, which I hastened to break by forcing a laugh.

George, awakened from the stupor into which he appeared to have fallen, followed my example. Janet said, "absurd," with contemptuous incredulity; and the lady I have before mentioned, like the foolish creature she was, maladroitly burst into tears, and left the room.

Grace alone of us all remained silent, and outwardly unaffected.

"The spirits are too odious to be endured now," remarked Hargraves, rising from the table. "I do believe, Grace, that they are trying to revenge themselves on you for having neglected them so long. Let us go to the next room, dear, and have some music."

It was only when I saw her in the light of the other room that I realised how deeply she had been affected.

Her face was perfectly white, and her eyes, instead of drooping, as was their wont when met, looked straight at one with a strange, unseeing expression.

She sat at the piano, and resumed the piece she had been playing when our laughter had interrupted her. It was Beethoven's "Adieu," commonly supposed to be the great master's last composition.

It is, as you are doubtless aware, a composition full of beauty and divine simplicity, but so intensely melancholy that I would rather she had played anything else just then.

But, oh! how beautifully she played it. So softly, lingering and regretfully, that when the noble theme died slowly away upon the piano, it long left its mournful echo in my memory, and kept alive melancholy in my heart.

When she had left the piano, I rose to go.

"Good-night, Grace; good-night, George. And, by-the-bye," I added in her hearing, "since the spirits have taken to making bad jokes, I think we had better cut their acquaintance."

"I quite agree with you," he replied.

Then, as he came with me to the door, I hinted my opinion that Grace needed change of air, and on that point he also agreed with me.

For several months after that night I saw nothing of the Hargraves'. George and his wife went to the South, where they had numerous relations, and shortly after their departure business suddenly called me abroad, where I remained for nearly six months.

During that uncertain period for both of us (George, I afterwards learned, was still moving among his relatives), it is not strange that no correspondence passed between us.

I had by no means forgotten my friends, although the circumstances which attended our last meeting were dim in my memory. Altogether, ten months passed before we again met.

On the afternoon of the day on which I again found myself in the city, I met Hargraves face to face as I was coming out of a bank.

We were both delighted at the meeting. I told him that I had intended calling at his house in the evening in the hope that he had returned to town.

Then as we walked arm-in-arm westward I asked after Grace.

"I am sorry to say," he replied, "that Grace had been ailing for sometime—quite three months."

Distressed to hear such bad news, I inquired the cause of her illness, noticing at the same time how worn and troubled my friend was looking.

"Her illness puzzles me," said Hargraves; "and no wonder, since it puzzles all the doctors. She appears to be consumed with an inward fever, and her nervousness, which you will remember well, has so increased as to be now painful to witness. She has no appetite; nothing seems to interest or rouse her. The greatest physician in the country saw her, and spoke of nervous depression. He recommended tonics and change of air and scene; but as we had been moving about the country for months, the last piece of advice was valueless. You can judge of my anxiety."

I was silent. While he had been speaking, the recollection of that night ten months ago suddenly came to me with startling vividness.

"What to do next I don't know," pursued Hargraves. "I wish, if you are not engaged this afternoon, you would come home with me and see Grace. The sight of such an old friend might do her considerable good."

I gladly assented to my friends request, and he called a cab.

As we drove to his house I remarked:

"Do you think it possible that Grace may have something weighing upon her mind?"

He turned quickly as I spoke.

"Only to-day, for the first time, has such a thought entered my mind, and it has filled me with trouble. I had completely forgotten what occured when we last met—when I was wicked, cruel, mad enough to urge her into joining in our spirit mummery. May God forgive me, though I can never forgive myself."

"I, too, had almost forgotten it," I replied.

"But has she?" he exclaimed vehemently. "Has she? That is the question that is torturing me now. You know how terribly imaginative she is. I must find out by some means if that horrible prophecy is still in her mind, and if so make a clean breast of it to the doctors."

Just then we arrived at the house.

George led the way upstairs, and on the first landing we met Janet Carr.

"How is Grace?" asked George, impatiently, as we stopped to shake hands.

"I'm afraid she is no better," replied Janet, seriously. "I have been reading to her, but she did not seem able to settle her thoughts to listen."

At the door of the sick-room Hargraves by a gesture bade me wait for a moment. Then he entered alone.

"Grace, love," I heard him say, "I have brought an old friend with me. Are you well enough to see him?"

The reply was spoken too weakly for me to catch its sense; but in a few moments my friend stepped softly to the door and beckoned me within.

Grace was in bed, half sitting by the support of a number of pillows, an Indian shawl thrown round her shoulders. I was inexpressibly shocked—prepared though I was—by the change in her appearance. The flesh had fallen away from her face.

Her paleness, which was that of death, was only rendered more startling by the spot of vivid color on either cheek.

Her eyes, which were preternaturally bright, and inclined to wander, seemed to start from their deep, dark, hollow setting.

Directly I saw her I felt convinced that our suspicions of the cause of her illness were only too well founded; and by the strange look that crossed her face I became conscious, too, that the presence of me, of all people—connected as I was with that memorable evening—was the least likely to benefit her.

Accordingly, I determined not to remain longer than a few moments.

"Grace, this won't do at all," I said, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "This is not the reunion that I dreamed of in the months I spent across the Atlantic."

"I'm glad you've come back," she murmured faintly, stretching out a weak, thin hand.

"And now that I'm here," I continued, "I shall expect you, as a personal favor to me, to get well and strong again."

"Indeed, he deserves a jollier welcome than this, dear!" remarked Hargraves. "You may be sure that he will not be content until he sees you downstairs sitting at the piano as of old."

I left the bed, and was about to take George aside to whisper that I had better not stay, when we were arrested by a slight exclamation from Grace.

Turning quickly, we saw that she had risen upon her elbow, and that, with her face towards the door, she was bending eagerly forward.

Hargraves hurried to her side.

"What is it, darling?" he asked, with tender anxiety.

She made no reply.

"Grace—dear love—what is it?"

"Listen!" she whispered.

We both listened; but we heard nothing.

"What is it you hear, dear?" And, leaning against the bed, he wound his arm round her.

"'The Adieu,'" she murmured. "Beethoven's 'Adieu.' You remember? Listen!"

George threw a look of intense anguish at me, as we bent our heads once more to listen.

He heard nothing—but this time I did. I distinctly heard the melancholy strains of "L'Adieu," as if the music were being played softly and tenderly on the piano, as if Grace herself had played it.

I say I heard distinctly; but actual music there was none.

It was the intensity of the *seeming* to hear that made me hear. The music was made audible to me by the force of a highly-wrought imagination—the same force which brought Grace Hargraves her death.

For when I looked up she was lying back in her husband's arms—and life had fled.

Behind Time.

BY K. L.

"SIR EDGAR AVERILL!" announced Mrs. Moncton's smart page; and well-preserved, handsomely-dressed Mrs. Moncton dropped the embroidery with which she was trifling.

With a great deal of empressement, and both hands extended, she crossed the room to meet the visitor—a tall, stiff, ungainly man, who looked clever, but moved like a marionette, and was too near-sighted to recognize his dearest friends without the glasses he was always losing.

However, Sir Edgar was a baronet with a fine estate, and it is astonishing how cordially everyone greeted him, what efforts were made to draw him into society, and how frequently mothers with marriageable daughters expressed their surprise that Sir Edgar did not remember his obligations as a gentleman of wealth and position, and take to himself a wife.

"I began to think you had forgotten your appointment," Mrs. Moncton told him, playfully.

"I never forget an appointment," Sir Edgar replied, spoken in measured accents.

"Ah! you have such a memory!" she sighed; "but still I fancy you are later than you bade me expect you, or else my watch is fast, or else——"

"The train was ten minutes behind time when it stopped at your station," Sir Edgar explained. "Someone was to blame, but I could not learn who. I am afraid things are not well managed on your line, Mrs. Moncton."

"I am afraid not," she murmured; "but it is an immense relief to hear that there was no accident. Pray sit down. How tired you must be! I will ring for luncheon."

But Sir Edgar stepped between her and the bell.

"I beg you will not. I could not enjoy your hospitality while I am in suspense. When I have had the promised interview with your niece I may be glad of a glass of milk and a biscuit."

"Ah, yes; dear Emmie!" and Mrs. Moncton drew forth a lace-trimmed handkerchief and applied it to her eyes. "She is such a sweet, good girl; such a treasure in a house, that I do not know how I shall make up my mind to part with her even to you.

Sir Edgar looked stiffer than ever as he replied:

"I shall be sorry to put you to pain or inconvenience. Rather than do either, I will, if you wish it, defer my intended proposals to Miss Emily Moncton until you have fortified yourself to bear the loss of her."

"But I do not wish it!" cried the lady, hastily. "My dear Sir Edgar, how do you think I could be so selfish, so inconsiderate? Emily's happiness, not mine, is what I study, and I know I shall secure it by giving her to you."

"You think so? It is very gratifying to hear that you have formed a favorable opinion of me, and if Miss Emily endorses it——"

"Which she will do," interposed Mrs. Moncton. "She has been carefully reared, Sir Edgar. Ever since her mother's death she has resided with me, and I hope I have taught her to appreciate those solid virtues she will find in you."

Sir Edgar bowed and looked gratified, but could not think of anything to say, so glanced over his shoulder at the door, and seeing this, his hostess laughed archly.

"Ah! you do not care to be detained by me; you are eager for more congenial society, well, then, go to the library—there you will find my dearest child awaiting you. She has seen your letter, and she says ——but I must not repeat all she said about you; it will sound more sweetly from her lips than mine."

As Sir Edgar was backing towards the door all the while Mrs. Moncton was talking, he contrived to reach it by the time she paused, jerked himself through it, and disappeared.

"Thank goodness that ordeal is over!" exclaimed the lady, throwing herself on to a couch and using her fan vigorously. "Emily ought to be very grateful to me for all I have gone through just on her account!"

"My dear sister," and a pleasant little woman in the weeds of widow hood, who had been sitting half-hidden by a large screen, edged herself into view—"my dear sister, Emily is too warm-hearted, too right-minded ever to forget that you have been a second mother to her; but why you should be making desperate efforts to mate her with the walking scarecrow who has just left us I fail to see."

"Now, Mary, do not talk nonsense!" was the impatient reply. "Any person with a practical mind would see the absurdity, the absolute wickedness of sneering at a man because he has a few peculiarities!"

"Did I sneer at Sir Edgar Averill? Then I beg his pardon, for I daresay he is as good as he is awkward; but I am still of opinion that a marriage between him and our niece would be too much after the Beauty and the Beast style to be desirable."

"He has a house in Mayfair as well as his country one, a clear income of seven thousand per annum, and expectations besides," she was reminded. "Charming as Emily is, do you think she is ever likely to have such a chance again? Yes, I confess that I am very anxious to see her well married. Remember, my annuity dies with me and as I have always lived up to it, I have nothing to leave her but a few trinkets and a little bric-a-brac."

Mrs. Lane looked grave.

"Of course Sir Edgar's wooing is a great temptation to a penniless girl."

"Do not word your remarks in that unpleasant manner!" cried her sister angrily. "His offer is an excellent one, and, as I told her yesterday, no one in their sense would dream of refusing it. Think of the comfort to me of seeing my adopted daughter so well established. Think of the good she can do with Sir Edgar's money; you know how generous she is. Think—as I pointed out to her—how she can gratify her artistic tastes by travelling, and visiting museums and picture-galleries, and of the circle of gifted men and women she can gather round her."

"From your points of view, such arguments are overwhelming," said Mrs. Lane, with a shrug.

"Of course they are, and Emily herself, she was obliged to admit that I was right, and that she would be acting very foolishly to reject Sir Edgar. In fact, she never can have meditated doing so—it would be madness!"

"Of course you agree with me," Mrs. Moncton added, when her sister made no reply. "In my place, I feel sure that you would have done as I have done—entreated her not to let any girlish follies or fancies interfere with her prospects."

"Should I?" queried Mrs. Lane, thoughtfully, "I don't know. If Emily thinks she can love this Baronet, then by all means let her marry him; but was there not a young neighbor of yours—a clever, merry lad, a doctor's son, who went to London to fit himself to be assistant to his father?"

"Tom Lainson? Hush! Don't speak of him! It would be years before he would be in a position to marry; and just imagine Emily wasting all her bloom, that by the time she had withered into a middle-aged spinster she might marry a poor country doctor!"

"I married a poor man, and was very happy with him," said Mrs. Lane, wiping away a tear.

Her sister made a very pettish movement.

"I hope you do not set yourself up as an example for Emily to follow! Here you are in the prime of life—a widow without home or property!"

"I beg your pardon, Sarah; the forethought of my dear husband secured me enough for my wants, and with that I am satisfied. It is quite possible to have seven thousand a year and be a miserable woman. Were I in your place, I should shrink from the responsibility of inducing a young creature to go to the altar with a man for whom she does not feel a spark of affection."

"It will be Emily's fault if she is not happy with Sir Edgar," retorted Mrs. Moncton vehemently, "and you are very cruel to talk to me in this strain. I have acted for the best, and I refuse to discuss the subject with you any longer."

Meanwhile, Sir Edgar, his pulses beating more rapidly than common, stalked to the library.

He had not intended to marry; his scientific pursuits had absorbed him, and he was content to live in celibacy till he chanced to encounter Emily Moncton.

She had come to his assistance while he was exploring the ruins of an old castle at no great distance from her aunt's.

Not being an agile climber, he had contrived to slip while ascending the keep, and not only cut and bruised his head, but dropped his treasured note-book.

Sir Edgar fell on a heap of stones, and the book into a pond, from which Emily fished it out with the handle of her parasol.

She also staunched the crimson stream trickling from the Baronet's forehead, and bound her handkerchief around it, paying all these attentions to the *gauche*, silent, ill-dressed stranger, so kindly and deftly that it set him thinking how delightful it would be to have so sweet a creature always at his service.

Happening to meet Mrs. Moncton and her niece at an archeological reunion a few days afterwards, Sir Edgar obtained an introduction to both ladies, and by a little clever manoeuvring on the part of the elder, the acquaintance soon progressed to intimacy, and finally to proposals for Emily's hand.

These had been promptly accepted by her aunt, and nothing remained but to hear Emily herself confirm the acceptance and name the day for their nuptials.

Yet before entering the library he hesitated a moment, his courage oozing away as he drew near the beautiful girl on whose fiat he believed that his future happiness depended.

He was not afraid she would decline the honor of becoming Lady Averill, for he was quite alive to the advantage that would accure to her from the connection, but a fear was upon him he was acting hastily.

Suppose his bride should prove less docile than he anticipated, and refuse to interest herself in his hobbies, or insist on a season in town, or in filling his house with fashionables instead of being content to live quietly with him for her sole companion, and find all pleasures in pottering about crumbling abbeys and in opening barrows, and copying the learned articles he wrote for learned journals?

But he shook off these apprehensions as childish and uncalled for, and boldly lifted the heavy velvet portiere that took the place of door to the small, but very pretty room Mrs. Moncton, on the strength of a few modern novels, dignified with the name of the library.

* * * * * *

Emily Moncton was not alone; she was standing near an open window that led into the garden, the sunshine glinting on her golden hair and delicately-flushed cheek, her tall, slight figure most becomingly attired in a morning-dress of the palest heliotrope, trimmed with a profusion of lace.

She did not perceive the Baronet, for her eyes were riveted on the face of the person with whom she was conversing.

This person was of the male sex—a gardener, perhaps, to whom she was giving some instructions, or a tradesman who had called for orders.

Sir Edgar fumbled in his vest for his eyeglass wherewith to examine the man, and finding it, after a long search, hanging down his back, proceeded to make his inspection.

A very nice, gentlemanly-looking young fellow this, for a gardener or village grocer, with a deep, mellow voice, that thrilled on the ear as he unconsciously raised it louder and yet louder.

But was he nothing more? He was holding both the lady's hands clasped in his. He was gazing at her with passionate affection depicted on every feature, and Emily was in tears.

"You might have written to me," she was saying reproachfully.

"I did write, twice, and my letters were returned to me by Mrs. Moncton, with a few lines to the effect that while you were so young she objected to our corresponding. Presently—she added—if we continued to wish it, she might be induced to withdraw the embargo."

"My aunt did not tell me this. Indeed Tom, I have feared—thought, I should say—that you had quite forgotten me."

"Forgotten you, Emily! when it is for you—in the sweet hope of calling you mine—that I have been working! You ought to have known me better than to doubt my constancy."

"Ah, do not speak unkindly to me now!" she pleaded. "Let us be friends, and promise that you will always judge me generously, whatever I do."

"Then it is true that you are going to marry a wealthy Baronet? I heard the report at my uncle's, but I would not believe it till your own lips confirmed it. I came here early this morning, and have been walking about the lanes debating whether I should be justified in disturbing your felicity, till I caught sight of your face at the window, and I could not resist leaping the fence, and coming here. It is for the last time? When I see you again—if ever—will it be as the wife of another?"

"What can I do?" she asked, piteously. "If I had known you still loved me, I might have held out, but how could I oppose my aunt, to whom I owe everything, when I had no reason to allege for it?"

"And you will marry Sir Edgar!" said Tom Lainson in despairing accents. "Yet why should I blame you? What have I to offer my darling but a share of my poverty—whilst this more fortunate fellow can surround you with luxuries, and grant you every wish? I ought not to repine, I will not if he makes you happy: but—but it is hard to bear."

"And do you think," exclaimed Emily Moncton, withdrawing her hands from his and retreating a step or two—"do you think I can be happy while you are miserable?—or that I have been mean enough to propose accepting Sir Edgar Averill for his riches? No, Tom, no. It is because he is so good and so lonely. In becoming his wife I should relinquish all my own dreams of brighter days. His love would never compensate for the loss of yours; but I would rather share the life of a man who would regard me merely as a useful appendage, than be wedded to one who would demand an affection it would not be in my power to give."

"In either case such a sacrifice should not be expected of you," cried Tom, hotly. "I will go to Mrs. Moncton, I will promise not to approach nor write to you if she will pledge herself to make no further attempts to force you into an uncongenial marriage."

But this Emily would not allow him to do.

"It would be useless," she assured him. "My aunt is not to be moved when once she has resolved on anything. She did not leave my room last night, in spite of my tears and prayers, until I had consented to marry Sir Edgar. She believes that it is for my good she is doing this; and I have tried to think so too. If I had not seen you I might have reconciled myself; but now—oh, Tom, Tom!"

He folded her in his arms, and she wept on his shoulder, but, quickly recovering, withdrew herself from his embrace.

"You must leave me, for Sir Edgar may arrive at any moment. I will be quite frank with him. He shall know that you and I have loved each other from children, and that I should have betrothed myself to you before you went to London, if my aunt had not forbidden it."

"And then?" queried Tom.

"Then, if he still wishes to make me his——"

Her voice faltered; again she let her head droop on her lover's shoulder, and Sir Edgar Averill dropped the portiere and went back to the morning-room, where Mrs. Moncton, all traces of agitation carefully banished from her comely visage, was awaiting him.

"My dear Sir Edgar!" she exclaimed, in a flutter of joy not unmixed with alarm. "What news do you bring me?"

"Do not let me disturb you madame," he said, halting just inside the door, and looking at his watch. "I find that by quick walking I can catch the next train to town and as I have an engagement there of some importance, I cannot stay and lunch with you.

Mrs. Moncton fell back in her chair.

"Then that naughty, wilful girl has rejected you?"

"Miss Moncton has not seen me," the Baronet replied.

"Is it possible! Then what have you been doing?"

"Reflecting that I am not the sort of man to win a young lady's affections. On second thoughts, I have come to the conclusion that I made a mistake when I proposed to alter my condition. Hitherto I have been wedded to scientific pursuits: why should I relinquish them?"

"Something must have occurred to bring you to this decision, Sir Edgar?"

"Madame," he asseverated, "your niece is a very charming young woman. I never loved her so well as now that I bid her farewell for ever."

Having said this, the Baronet bowed awkwardly and was gone; Mrs. Moncton, as soon as she had shaken off her first stupor of astonishment and chagrin, hurrying to the library, where Emily was once more alone and too much excited to have any reservations.

No, she had not seen the Baronet, but she had seen Tom Lawson and heard from him that his letters had been withheld. It was not treating her fairly, and——

She was not allowed to say more; her aunt was furious at the utter failure of her schemes, and though Emily (frightened at her harshness) deprecated it humbly, and promised to obey her in all else, she was not to be appeased.

At last Mrs. Lane was roused into interfering.

"You had better go home with me, Em. If you mean to marry a poor man it will do you good to have an insight into the style of living you will have to endure with. If not, you and my poor sister are best apart until she has reconciled herself to your very unworldly conduct."

So Emily Moncton left her aunt's luxurious dwelling to share Mrs. Lane's cottage, and submit patiently to the long engagement Tom's want of means necessitated.

It was not a very long one after all, for he was offered the post of house-surgeon at a hospital in the North where the resident medical man was liberally remunerated for his services. As this payment included a pleasant suite of rooms there was no reason why his marriage should be delayed, and Emily consented to be his without one pang of regret for the wealthy suitor she might have wedded.

Scarcely had she commenced her modest preparations when, from an anonymous donor, she received notes to the amount of two thousand dollars for her trousseau.

Although Mrs. Moncton refused to forgive her niece, and returned her letters unopened, the grateful Emily credited her with the gift till, by some chance, Tom Lawson discovered that his bride owed this thoughtful aid to the same person who had obtained for him the berth he was filling with such satisfaction to every one connected with the institution, and that this person was none other than Sir Edgar Averill.

A Sister's Sacrifice.

BY A. L.

IT was a dreary night towards the end of November, and two girls sat in a long, low room that looked towards the South.

Had they been model girls, they would have been in bed long before, for it was after twelve o'clock; but they had seen so little of each other in late years that the temptation to sit over their fire and talk had proved too strong.

Dorothy, the elder sister, was two and twenty. She was tall and slight, with an abundance of dark hair, and large grey eyes; her complexion was pale, though not sufficiently so to make her look delicate, and her features marked.

Her mouth was a trifle large, and looked too firm and decided for a girl; but the softness of her beautiful eyes and her sweet smile made her general expression very winning.

The younger girl's name was Nina. She was so unlike Dorothy, that it seemed almost impossible to believe they were sisters.

She was very small and fair, with hair of a bright golden color and eyes of a clear transparent blue; her complexion was brilliantly pink and white, and her features small and daintily formed.

Their father had died soon after Nina was born, and they had lived alone with their mother.

When Dorothy was fifteen and Nina some four years younger, their mother had died also, and their only near relations were a much older brother of their mother's and his wife.

Mrs. Musgrave had left her children well provided for, and their uncle, not wishing to upset his domestic arrangements, had sent his nieces to school abroad.

Dorothy had stayed there until she was nineteen, when her return to her uncle's house could not very well be longer delayed.

At first she had found life there anything but pleasant, but things looked brighter when she met Vere Harcourt.

This gentleman had a property close to her uncle's, to which he was in the habit of coming for the summer; but during the first year of Dorothy's stay at the Park he had been abroad, though the following season found him once more at the Hurst, doing bachelor honors to his numerous friends.

It did not take him long to see how true and womanly was Dorothy, and a great wave of compassion came upon him when he saw how barren of love was her young life.

He liked and admired Dorothy—nay, respected her—and treated her with a chivalrous devotion that was balm to her soul. They had been engaged three months when my story commenced and were married in the spring.

Nina had been home from school six weeks, and during that time Vere had been at The Hurst.

At first he and Nina had been excellent friends; and Dorothy, whose one wish had been that these two might know and love each other, felt her cup of happiness was indeed full, when to her surprise and bitter disappointment, an unnatural constraint and coldness appeared to have sprung up between them, instead of the easy familiarity that had formerly existed, and yesterday her *fiancé* had left home without giving any particular reason, saying that he would perhaps be unable to return till just before their wedding.

As Dorothy sat before the fire, in her pretty pink dressing-gown, on that cold November night, her thoughts were full of his abrupt departure, and, in spite of Nina's apparent indifference to him, and the dislike she always showed to discussing him, Dorothy could not forbear to speak of it.

"I cannot understand this sudden freak of Vere's," she said to her sister. "He has never left home for more than a day or two at a time since we have been engaged, and now he's going off in this way seems most unaccountable. I cannot understand it," she repeated. "Can you, dear?"

"Perhaps he has business matters to see to," suggested Nina, who was gazing into the fire.

This sounded plausible, and gave Dorothy a minute or two's relief, and enabled her to think of something else.

Now, the thing that was next in her thoughts was the coldness existing between her two dearest ones, and she determined to speak to Nina about it.

"Nina, my dear," she said, in the pretty, hesitating way she always spoke of Vere, "I do hope that, when we are married, you will get to like Vere better; he is so good and true, if you would only try and understand him."

Nina made a little gesture of dissent, but she went on:

"If you would try and love him a little for my sake. Think what he has been to me. I was all alone in the world but for you, and you were far away, and I felt so sad and uncared for, dear, and then he came, and has made my life beautiful for me. Oh! Nina, for my sake, couldn't you love him a little?" she repeated, piteously.

But Nina made no answer. She was sitting so that Dorothy could not see her face, and she made no sign when her sister left off speaking.

The silence was intolerable, and Dorothy began again:

"I had always hoped that you two would be such good friends, and we had settled that you were to have the prettiest rooms at The Hurst, for Vere was quite as anxious as I that our home should be yours; but even now, although you do not care for him, you will not let that interfere with our plans. You will live with us just the same, and I, my darling, will do all that is in my power to make you happy, and in time perhaps—oh! I know you will, you must grow fond of him, no one could know him and not admire him—dearest, I know you will in time; and for the present you will not let that come between us. You will live with me just the same, will you not, my dear? Oh, promise me that you will!"

Nina was still sitting with her face turned away, and made no answer. Dorothy went and knelt beside her, and put her arms round her.

"You will promise, won't you dear?" she asked again.

Nina had covered her face with her hands, and answered huskily through her fingers:

"I cannot—I cannot. You must not ask me."

Something in her voice alarmed Dorothy, who with gentle force pulled away the little trembling fingers and looked into her sister's face. Was this, could this be Nina? Her pretty childishness was gone; it had vanished in a few seconds, and left her looking old and haggard.

"Nina," cried Dorothy, "can it be—tell me, my darling, do not deceive me—can it be that you too love him—not a little for my sake," pitifully quoting her own words, "but for his own? Tell me," she demanded, "do not keep me in suspense; tell me that you do not love him."

"Oh! don't hate me," sobbed the girl, "I could not help it; I have tried so hard, so hard, but it was no use. It was not his fault; you must not blame him. I will go away, and never trouble you again. Ah! you hate me, you despise me, I know you do. Speak to me, Dorothy; say something, abuse me, anything, only speak to me."

Dorothy had got up from her knees when the girl began to speak, and was standing, looking cold and hard, straight in front of her.

"Dorothy, speak to me, or I shall go mad," almost screamed Nina; and almost before her sister had time to catch her, she had fallen in a dead faint at her feet.

Dorothy lifted her in her strong arms, and laid her on her bed. As she lay there, she looked so slight and childish that the hatred which had sprung up in the elder girl's heart melted away never to return. She brushed back the little yellow curls and bathed the aching brow till Nina opened her eyes again.

"It is all right, my darling," said Dorothy in her soft, slow voice; "go to sleep now. You have not been well; you are tired. Sleep now, like a good child," she added, caressingly, "and to-morrow, will be well."

She had been taking off her dressing-gown while she talked, and now arranged the pillows and tucked her up as if she had been a child.

Nina was quite worn out and almost asleep, so Dorothy kissed her softly, and turned away.

As she did so, her eye fell upon a large photograph of Vere which stood upon her writing-table.

"And this is the end of it," she said to herself, but her mind once made up she never faltered.

She went to the table and took a sheet of notepaper. A moment or two of thought, she wrote:—

"Dear Vere,—I see now how blind I have been, but it is not too late to rectify our error. You pitied me and admired me, and did not wait to consider if that was love; and when you found out what love was, your noble heart bade you sacrifice yourself rather than betray me. But could I be happy knowing that in my selfishness I had wrecked your life and my sister's! Heaven forbid! Nina is worn out and not well, but you coming to-morrow—for I know you will come—will make her forget her troubles. Rather to you than any other man in the world would I trust my darling, and I pray Heaven that you may both be happy.

"Dorothy Musgrave."

She addressed and stamped her envelope with a trembling hand, and then stole down in the dark to put it where it would be posted the first thing in the morning. Coming back to her room, she took Vere's photograph and kissed it passionately many times, and then carried it to Nina's table, where she placed it so that the girl would see it when she first awoke in the morning, for hereafter he was Nina's lover and no longer hers.

Then she stole back to the room, and sat before the fire, and sat before the dying embers till the dawn came in at the windows to remind her that her task was not yet done, that she had the day to face and Vere to meet, and was she still willing to take up her self-appointed cross? Aye, verily, and nobly and bravely she bore it, too.

A long-promised visit to a school friend on the Continent gave her the opportunity of going away; and when she returned Nina and Vere were just settled at home after their honeymoon, and the once ungracious aunt, having fallen into ill-health, found Dorothy so kind a nurse and so unselfish a companion that she opened her heart to her, and thenceforth the two were so dependent on each other for ministration and sympathy that the girl found compensation for her magnanimity in a warm home affection and devotion that brought its own reward.

THE COTTON SEED.—Was there ever such a history as that of the cotton seed, of which we read so much in the daily newspapers? For seventy years despised as a nuisance, and burned or dumped as garbage; then discovered to be the very food for which the soil was hungering, and reluctantly admitted to the rank of utilities; shortly afterward found to be nutritious food for beast as well as for soil, and thereupon treated with something like respect.

Once admitted to the circle of farm industries, it was found to hold thirty-five gallons of pure oil to the ton, worth, in its crude state, $14 to the ton; or $40,000,000 for the whole crop of seed.

But then a system was devised for refining the oil up to a value of $1 a gallon, and the frugal Italians placed a cask of it at the root of every olive-tree and then defied the Boreas breath of the Alps.

And then experience showed that the ton of cotton seed was a better fertilizer and a better stock when robbed of its thirty-five gallons of oil than before; and that the hulls of the seed made the best of fuel for feeding the oil-mill engine; and that the ashes of the hulls scooped from the engine's draft had the highest commercial value as potash; and that the "refuse" of the whole made the best and purest soap stock, to carry to the toilet the perfumes of the best soap.

THERE is only one physician to every 5000 the population in Russia, and yet the destitution among members of the profession is said to be alarming. Of late there have been numbers of suicides of medical men who were without the bare necessities of life. This state of things is attributed to the ignorance of the people, who consult soothsayers and magicians in preference to educated medical men. Men who have served in the ambulance corps or as hospital attendants, and thus gained a smattering of medical knowledge, are allowed to practice, which is another drawback to the profession.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The "chestnut," as a slang phrase, is done with, frost bitten, quite, and an equally meaningless word has been substituted. It is "dusty." Do you admire anything, from a stylish toilet to a dainty dish, you are privileged to say: "There is nothing 'dusty' about that." On the whole, when one takes time to consider, there is more sense in "dusty" than in most fashionable slang. A dusty object suggests one whose freshness is despoiled. Just how the "chestnut" was ever significant no one has yet clearly defined.

The latest craze among the actresses is the hand and arm photograph. They spend no end of money posing their hands to have pictures taken of them. Almost always they hold something in the hand that is to be pictured—a wineglass, a diamond ring just touched by two dainty fingers, a visiting card or a silver coin. Those who are proud of their arms have them photographed, often the full bare arm and shoulder without a hint of clothing, or just the hint of a short lace sleeve with a buxom arm issuing from it. Some non-professionals are beginning to share the craze.

The new notes which the Bank of France is about to issue will be in two colors—blue and pink, so blended as to produce a general tint approaching violet. It is believed at the bank that these notes are inimitable, except at an expenditure of time and money that would effectually check enterprise in that direction. The new fifty and hundred franc notes are now being printed, and those of five hundred and a thousand francs will soon leave the engravers' hands. The new notes have been produced in a twentieth part of the time spent on those which are now to be gradually withdrawn from circulation. The designer was three years engaged upon the model of the present thousand franc note, and that of the hundred franc was five years in the artist's hands.

A census of the illiterates in the various countries of the world, recently published, places the three Slavic States of Roumania, Servia and Russia at the head of the list, with about 89 per cent. of the population unable to read and write. Of the Latin-speaking races Spain heads the list with 82 per cent., followed by Italy with 48 per cent., France and Belgium having about 15 per cent. "In England we find 13 per cent., Holland 10 per cent., United States (white population) 6 per cent., and Scotland 7 per cent., unable to read and write. When we come to the purely Teutonic States we find a marked reduction in the percentage of illiterates. The highest is in Switzerland, 2.5; in the whole German Empire it is but 1 per cent.; in Sweden, Denmark, Bavaria, Baden, and Wurtemberg there is practically no one who cannot read and write."

El Paso, Tex., is the distribution point of some rather wild stories, of which the following—the latest—is certainly a good specimen: During a heavy snow storm in Sierra county, New Mexico, Captain Crozier got lost while en route on horseback from his ranch to Chloride, a small mining camp. He had neither a gun with him to discharge, and thus attract attention and help, nor matches to start a fire. All he had was a pocket knife. When he found that he was fast getting benumbed, he killed his horse with the knife, took out the entrails and crawled into the warm carcass, leaving only the liver inside. Completely covered up with snow he remained in this retreat for three days, eating meanwhile a portion of the horse's liver. When he was missed a party went out to hunt for him and was successful in its search. He was taken to Fairview, a mining camp on the Cadrillo Negro Creek. He is badly frostbitten.

The use of English customs among us are often abused. Many of those adopted are as useless and meaningless as was the colored shirt and white collar business, which an accident to the attire of the Prince of Wales made the fashion. Our equestrian exquisites all carry a crop stick simply because "it's English, real English, quite English, you know." You will see these riding sticks with their more or less heavy and elaborate silver crook at one end and leather loop at the other in all the fashionable stores. They have really superseded the light, pretty riding whips that used to be carried—yet what are they? Simply a useless, meaningless American adoption of a fashion that in England is quite useful. The roads, turnpikes, and lanes there abound in gates. Nearly every gentleman's bridle-path entrance to his estate is so guarded. By the aid of this crop the rider can catch the latch of the gate and open and close it after him. In this country there are no gates, and the whip's successor becomes, to those who know its origin, only another of the anglo-mania's absurdities.

"Don't you see that notice up there?" asked the grocer, pointing scornly to a placard on the wall bearing the fateful words, "Positively No Credit Given Here. "Yes, I see it," answered the man who had just asked for some goods on credit. "But now about that other sign up there on the other side, 'If You Don't See What You Want, Ask for It?'"

Our Young Folks.

IN FAIRYLAND.

BY SHEILA.

"I WILL tell you of the German fairies," said Aunt Madge, as the children clustered around her asking for a fairy story. "But there is so much to say about them that I hardly know where to begin."

"The mountains are supposed to be full of dwarfs, and the mines of these little creatures gnomes; nixies lived in the rivers and streams, elves and wood-wives played in the forests; and friendly kobolds were said to reside in the barns and cellars.

"Then there were giants and wild women with long flowing hair, who, it was thought, lived inside the hills with the little dwarfs who had charge of the treasures concealed there.

"Nor were these the only inhabitants, for sometimes ancient German heroes were said to sleep and enchanted sleep inside of these green hills.

"A mountain near Salzburg, called the Wunderberg, or Wonder Mountain, is supposed to be full of beautiful palaces, and gardens, and springs of gold and silver.

"Here the famous Emperor Charles V. sleeps, with his knights around him; a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand.

"His gray beard has grown twice around the table at which he sits, and when it has encircled it the third time, the end of the world, says the legend, will be close at hand.

"Another emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, is said to sleep inside the Kyffhauser Mountain, in Thuringia, and his red beard has also grown around the table twice.

"Every seven years he changes his position, and he is supposed to awake occasionally. A story is related of a shepherd lad who happened to pluck a strange blue flower which grew on the mountain, he instantly perceived an iron door in the rock which he had never seen before.

"When he pushed it, it opened directly, the adventurous lad went down a large flight of steps and entered a magnificent banqueting hall.

"Treasures of gold and precious stones were scattered about; and the hall was as light as day, and round a table, in the centre, sat Barbarossa and his followers, all sound asleep.

"But the noise of the intruder's entrance roused the old Emperor; he lifted his head and asked him:

"'Do the ravens still fly round the mountain?'

"'Yes, sire,' answered the lad.

"'Then I must sleep a hundred years longer,' said the emperor, and he told the lad to help himself to the treasure, cautioning him not to forget the best.

"The shepherd took as much as he could carry and went away, leaving the blue flower behind him. The consequence was that directly he got outside the iron door shut with a crash, and every sign of it disappeared.

"The dwarfs of Germany are sometimes called hill-men; and sometimes the still men because it is thought they dislike noise. I am not quite sure whether the peasants believe in them at the present time, of course you and I know that such little creatures never existed at any period.

"They are said to be kind hearted; and always liberally reward anyone who does them a service, but if annoyed or injured they plague the farmer's cattle.

"At three years old a dwarf is considered to be grown up, and at six he is a greybeard. In the mountains of Hesse numbers of these wee people were supposed to dwell in the clefts and holes of the rocks, where they have chambers positively filled with gold and jewels.

Tradition declares that a colony of dwarfs in former times lived in a hill near the little town of Dardesheim, and it seemed a grand thing for the people to have such neighbors. For only think; whenever anybody needed a grain tress, or other article of attire, he had only to go to the dwarf hill, knock three times, and say his petition aloud, finishing with the words: 'Before the sun is up to-morrow, at the hill shall be the things we borrow.'

"The request was always granted, and the dwarfs were quite contented, if, in return, some of the good things left over from the feast were set down at the foot of the hill.

"I must tell you that the dwarfs are supposed to wear a little red cap, called a 'mist cap,' which renders them invisible to the eye.

"If by accident it falls off its owner can be seen.

* * * * * *

"German mines are thought to be peopled by queer old men about two feet high, called gnomes.

"They have long beards, and are dressed like miners, with leather aprons and white hoods to their shirts.

"Although the real miners never, of course, see the gnomes, because they are nothing but fancy, yet they have a strong belief in their existence.

"Any noises underground which cannot at once be accounted for are put down to the gnomes, who are supposed to be digging and pounding with their tiny pickaxes. If they make a greater disturbance than usual it is regarded as a sign that there will shortly be an accident.

"The gnomes pretend to do a vast amount of work, and flit about the passages with their lanterns, as busy as bees, but the miners do not expect to get any help from them.

"The house sprite is known in Germany by the name of kobold, and is supposed to be a useful hard-working little fellow, with red hair and red beard, and a pointed red cap.

"Folks declare that the kobold occasionally stole corn from the neighbors to feed his master's horses with, and that when a maidservant left a situation she had to warn her successor to treat him kindly or else things never went well with her afterwards.

"There is a house in North Germany called the kobold's house, because one of these sprites was said to have formerly lived there, and played all sorts of pranks.

"The house belonged to some fishermen, and when they were lying fast asleep at night it was the kobold's great amusement to lay them in an even row.

"First he would draw them up until their heads were in line; then he would go to their feet and pull them down, until they too were arranged to his liking. The men being of different heights, the kobold could never succeed in getting both rows even; nevertheless, he used to play at the game all night long, and find it highly entertaining.

"I need hardly tell you that there are no kobolds in Germany now; they belong to those ancient times when people believed so firmly in the existence of a race of fairy beings that they were ready to imagine that the most improbable stories about them were true.

"Here is a funny recipe for procuring a house-sprite. 'If anyone wishes to have a kobold, he must go on St. John's Day between twelve and one at noon into the forest to an ant hill, on which he will find a bird sitting, to which he must speak certain words, when it will transform itself into a kobold, and jump into a bag held ready for the purpose, and in which he must be carried home.'

* * * * *

"The water-spirits, supposed to live in the lakes and rivers, are termed nixies.

"The man has green teeth and wears a green hat; or else he is said to look like a wild boy with a red cap on the top of his yellow curls. His ears are not quite like the generality of ears, and there is something odd about his feet, but I forget exactly what it is; at any rate, he does not like to show them.

"It is thought that the nix has the power of foretelling future events; but he objects to being disturbed in his watery domain, and is very angry if people attempt to measure the depth of the lake, or even take a swim in it.

"If children tumble into a well, they are supposed to belong to the nix, who gives them tangled flax to spin.

"There are lady nixies too, according to German tradition, who resemble beautiful maidens, and sit on the banks of the streams combing their long golden hair.

"Sometimes it is imagined that they entice mortals down to their splendid home beneath the water.

"The lady nix will occasionally go to market to buy provisions, and at such times she is dressed like any other woman the only difference being that one corner of her apron, or some other part of her clothes, is always wet.

"Is it not strange how all these queer fancies about creatures who never existed came to be believed in?

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"The forests are supposed to be peopled by tiny moss-covered elves, to whom the general name of wood folk is applied. The little wood-wives are accused of helping themselves to the woodcutters' food, but they always give something in exchange.

"When people are baking, they will go and ask to have a loaf baked for them as large as half a mill-stone; this must be left for them at a certain place which they name, and perhaps in return they bring some of their own bread, and are deeply offended if it is not accepted.

"At another time the wood wife will ask some stranger who meets her to mend a tiny broken wheel-barrow, and for payment gives him a few of the chips, which presently change into gold.

"But the quaintest idea of all is, that every time a man twists the stem of a young tree till the bark flies off a little wood-wife has to die.

"Now, there is just time for me to tell you about a fairy lady, called Frau Holda, and then my stories must come to an end.

"Frau Holda is a wonderful dame, who seems to be here, there, and everywhere, although she is popularly supposed to reside in a lake or fountain.

"When the sun shines, German children say that she is combing her hair, and when it snows, that she is making her bed.

"During the twelve days after Christmas Day, Frau Holda is supposed to pass through the land on a visit of inspection, and to give it her blessing, provided she finds everything in order.

"She appears to take a great interest in spinning, and is said to reward industrious girls who are good spinners, and to burn the wheels of idle ones.

"An old decayed tree is often called in Germany, 'Frau Holda's tree,' and ladybirds are considered her particular property. The German children think that if they killed one of these pretty little insects the sun would not shine the next day. Why not?

"Oh, because Frau Holda would be angry, don't you see?"

TRAINING CHILDREN'S FEATURES.—A correspondent believes that children's features like their manners can be trained. He writes:

"To joke upon ears that stand out from the head, would be somber fun for a victim. But all young parents ought to know that this trial to a child be just as surely averted as a 'tip-tilted' nose. If the mother teaches her nurse always to lay the infant in the cradle on its ear, never leaving the pillow push it out, the ears will grow flat to the head. Just so the nose can be 'educated' by a very gentle pull to the bridge of it every day of babyhood to grow straight. A pretty mouth is often spoiled by a careless parent allowing the little three-year-old to suck its thumb."

DOROTHY'S DRIVE.

BY MINNIE DOUGLAS.

"WELL, I'm sure!" cried nurse reproachfully, as she entered the nursery one afternoon to see what the children were doing; "if I was a young lady or gentleman, and had a baby brother fast asleep, I'm sure I wouldn't wake him up with my quarrelling!"

"We're not quarrelling," said Hubert grandly, looking from Dorothy's flushed face to the ceiling.

"What is the noise I hear then?" said nurse.

"We are having an argument—just like father and Mr. Wells do—only," he added with a sidelong glance of contempt at his sister, "Dolly goes red in the face, and stamps, and Mr. Wells doesn't."

"Well, don't have any more arguments, please," ordered nurse, "but run downstairs to Miss Grace."

Away they rushed, coming into collision at the head of the stairs, and just escaping tumbling down.

Grace Raymond was nearly fifteen, and the eldest of six children.

Two brothers were at school, and to Hubert and Dolly, Grace was a very big person indeed; so when they scampered into her presence this particular afternoon they expected to hear some occupation which would be given to them by their elder sister to keep them quiet.

"What can we do, Gracie?" asked Hubert eagerly.

"Wait here a minute while I go and ask mother something," answered Grace, going out at the door.

"But, Gracie, we'll come too!" said Dolly.

"No, you must stay here," said the elder sister.

Neither Dolly or Hubert approved of this arrangement, and the latter caught at the door to prevent its being shut. A regular tug of war commenced at once.

Grace alone, with her superior strength, would have been successful, but Hubert called on sturdy little Dolly to help him, and between them they pulled so lustily that Grace gave up, and laughed good-temperedly as she did so.

"You have managed to keep the door open, but unless you stay quietly here while I go to mother you will miss the chance of something you would like very much."

"What is it? Oh! do tell us!" asked Hubert anxiously.

"Wait and see," said Grace; and the little people obeyed, only standing in the wide-opened door, and watching their sister down the long hall which led to their mother's room.

Their mother was an invalid, and it was only at certain times that the younger children were allowed to see her, as it was necessary she should be free from both worry and noise.

It seemed a long while to them as they waited, but grace was soon back.

"Go and get your things on; mother says I may drive both of you over to Hutton in the pony carriage, as she wants a note taken to the doctor."

With a glance of delight at each other the children ran for their hats, Dolly leaning over the stairs to ask if she might take Marie Antoinette, her doll.

Grace nodded, and the little girl busied herself in putting on the most elegant outdoor garments her doll possessed, at the same time assuring her that they were the very latest fashion.

When they went down Grace was ready and waiting for them in the hall, and the pretty pony carriage stood waiting at the door.

"Be very good, children," said the invalid mother, looking out of the window by which her sofa was placed; "do you feel quite safe going alone with them, Grace—I hope you do?"

"Oh, yes, mother, dear; we shall not be long gone, and if the doctor is in we'll bring back the medicine."

With a bright nod to her mother she started the fresh little pony, and Dolly, who sat beside her, told Marie Antoinette to look what a beautiful view of the fields there was on one side of the road, and how high the banks were on the other.

Hubert, who sat opposite to his little sister, laughed and said—

"Fancy telling a thing with glass eyes to look at anything!"

Dolly's face colored at this remark of her brother's, and she hugged her doll close in indignant silence.

"And only think," went on the tiresome boy, "of taking to a thing that never even takes its boots off!"

"Be quiet, Hubert!" said Grace, looking kindly at earnest little Dolly. "You wouldn't like anything you cared for made fun of—your hat, fishing-rod, or your tricycle, for instance."

Hubert looked up teasingly.

"But, Grace, I don't pretend they're alive you know."

"Of course not—because nothing alive is at all alike them. Here we are at Dr. May's. Now, Hubert, can I trust you to sit quite still and hold the reins while I go and see him, and deliver mamma's note?"

"Yes; I promise."

So the little boy with the sailor suit seated himself with much importance in the driving seat of the chaise, and took the reins from his sister.

As soon as Grace had disappeared inside the green wooden gate which shut out all inquiring eyes from the doctor's house and garden, Hubert pushed his broad straw hat to the back of his head, drew the reins carefully through the fingers of his left hand, and then took the whip in the other. Having posed himself in perfect resemblance to a coachman, as he thought, he turned to Dolly.

"I say, Dolly, if she can see, just tell Marie Antoinette to look at me!"

Poor Dolly could stand his teasing no more; she turned a crimson face towards the other side of the road, and stamped her foot on the bottom of the trap.

The noise startled the pony, which made a jerk forward.

Dolly and Marie Antoinette fell out of the carriage, while Hubert, in a hasty effort to clutch at his sister, pulled the reins, and brought the lash of the whip lightly over the pony's back. At this, off went the pony at full speed.

Hubert could only catch the reins with all his might, his hat and the whip both disappeared in the road, and he felt nothing but the rushing air filled with dust about him, and saw the pony, with ears well back, galloping with all his might down the road that led to the quarry.

So fast did they go that Hubert could distinguish nothing, but he knew he had passed his grandmother's house, and that in a few minutes they must be dashed over the sharp edge of the quarry close by. He shut his eyes, and prayed aloud.

"O God, forgive me, and bless papa and mamma and Grace and Dolly, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

He feared to open his eyes, and with white set face awaited the end, when, with startling abruptness, the pony stopped. Hubert shuddered, and opened his eyes to see two men bending over him.

Then he fainted.

When Hubert came to himself a dear old lady in a white cap was looking anxiously in his face, and he was lying on a sofa in his grandmother's house.

"Grandma," he said faintly, "where's Dolly?"

"Dolly!" cried Mrs. Raymond in alarm; "was she with you, my dear?"

"She fell out by the doctor's house when the pony first started to run away," said the boy, and tears slowly rolled over his pale face.

The doctor had been sent for, and now arrived with Grace and Dolly in his carriage. The latter was not hurt, but looked very frightened and sorrowful.

"Dolly, I'm so sorry I teased you. I won't again," whispered Hubert.

"Never mind," answered Dolly, throwing two loving little arms round her brother's neck; "only my poor doll is killed—broken, I mean," she nervously announced with tearful eyes.

"Well, you have had a narrow escape, my boy," said the good doctor, "and I think your mother will be glad to see you home, so you may come with me."

Grace and Dolly drove back in the pony carriage with a very subdued pony in front of them. The two laborers, who had leaped a fence just in time to save Hubert's life by stopping the pony, were told to come in the evening to see the boy's father.

"How came it all about, children?" asked their mother that evening, when she had heard their prayers.

"Why, I was arguing—no, quarreling, I mean—with Dolly. I vexed her, and she stamped her foot on the floor of the trap. The pony started, and Dolly fell out—then the pony ran away."

"And poor Marie Antoinette came to such a sad end!" said mother, looking tenderly at Dolly, whose lip quivered.

"Don't cry, Dolly," whispered Hubert to his little sister; "you shall have such a pleasant surprise."

And she did, for next day he took out some money he had saved for a new cricket-bat, and asked Grace to buy the best doll she could. And Grace brought her great friend Florence Leigh back to spend a few days, and between them they dressed a doll which was for long the delight of Dolly's heart.

These two children seldom had a disagreement now, and when Hubert went off to boarding school a year or two later, no one missed him more than Dolly, who took care of all that was dear to him in his absence, and longed for the holi days.

THE CENTURY.—The confusion in the question whether the year 1900 is a part of the nineteenth or of the twentieth century arises probably from the comparison of the age of the man with the years of the century. We do not call a child one year old till he has lived a year, and we call him ten, for instance all through his eleventh year. But the year one began with the day No. 1, and we call it the year one up to and including the 365th day. So the years 1 up to 100 comprise the first century, and the second century begins with the year 101 and ends with 200, and the nineteenth century began with the year 1801, and ends with the last day of the year.

A GENTLEMAN met a boy and asked him what o'clock it was. Being told that it was just twelve, he expressed some surprise, and said he thought it was more. "It's never anymore in these parts, sir," said the boy, simply; "it begins again at one."

STAND AND WAIT.

BY J. S. F.

And so, my child, your heart is almost weary,
And life has nothing that is fair to you?
Because, you say, with exclamation dreary,
"There is so little that a girl can do!"

And yet, I think, that somewhere in your city
Many there are who need a helping hand;
Or, at the least, some word of love and pity,
That they will prize, and subtly understand.

Be not cast down because of earthly treasure:
Little you have in silver and in gold.
These, too, are good; but God hath greater pleasure
In the heart's riches, which are manifold.

Do what you can, and let the Lord's increasing
Make of it more until the harvest come;
And meanwhile, strive and labor without ceasing,
Hearing Christ's voice above the city's hum.

Never a day within the crowded city,
Never an hour from morning until eve,
But that His Voice is heard to plead for pity,
But that His Heart is known to pain and grieve.

Go, then. But if your heart is sad and broken,
And to be helpless is your heaven-sent fate,
Take comfort, and remember, 'tis well spoken
That they, too, serve who only stand and wait!

TOASTS AND SENTIMENTS.

It was from a toasted bread or biscuit which early formed an addition to many drinks that we acquired the word "toast" as applied to the act of drinking the health of any person; or to any idea or sentiment, as it is called. We have very early mention of toast masters who arranged the amusements and promoted the conviviality of the company.

The best toast of the season was, we think, given by a printer—namely, "Woman—the fairest work in all creation. The edition is large, and no man should be without a copy."

A fond young lover, in a little speech anent the fair sex, referred to his sweet heart as a "Delectable dear, so sweet that honey would blush in her presence and treacle stand appalled."

It may not be difficult to concoct a pretty speech, but true gallantry combined with wit is needed in making one which shall contain as much delicacy as flattery.

"You forget that I am an old woman," said a lady in response to an admiring allusion in a neat speech from one of the old school. "Madam," was the reply, "when my eyes are dazzled by a diamond, it never occurs to me to ask a mineralogist for its history."

A celebrated statesman, when dining with a certain Duchess on her eightieth birthday, said, in proposing her health:

"May you live, my Lady Duchess, until you begin to grow ugly!"

Her ladyship's tongue was as ready as his own. She replied:

"I thank you, sir; and may you long continue your taste for antiquities."

Many amusing and witty allusions in giving toasts and applying sentiments are probably lost by ladies "excusing themselves," as may be instanced by the following:

Among the gifts of a newly married pair was a new broom, sent to the bride by a lady friend, the strange present being accompanied by this quatrain, "This trifling gift accept from me; its use I would commend; in sunshine, use the brushy part; in storms, the other end."

The sentiments of another of the gentler sex were equally humorously and tersely conveyed when she thus expressed herself regarding matrimony:

"Get married, young men, and be quick about it. Don't wait for the millennium for the girls to become angels. You'd look well beside an angel, wouldn't you, you wretches!"

Slightly ironical with regard to the fair creatures was one of the toasts drank at a recent celebration:

"Woman! she requires no eulogy; she speaks for herself."

This reminds us that an old bachelor at a wedding feast had the heartlessness to offer the following toast:

"Marriage—the gate through which the happy lover leaves his enchanted regions and returns to earth."

But this was somewhat atoned for by a more gallant wedding guest, who, at the marriage of a deaf and dumb couple, unwittingly wished them unspeakable bliss.

To talk humorously on such occasions requires thought before speech, lest one should be considered more amusing than complimentary. To quote a case in point. A gentleman was walking down the street the other day with a friend when they met a clergyman. The reverend gentleman, though possessed of a large brain, has but a diminutive body to support it. Quite recently he had united himself, for good or ill, to a buxom widow. The minister blushed a little as they passed.

"What is the meaning of that?" asked the companion.

"Well, you see," was the reply, "we had a tea fight at the minister's shortly after he was married. I was called upon to make a speech. You know you are expected to be humorous on such occasions; so I referred in a casual way to the minister as the widow's mite. He has acted strangely ever since."

Appropriate, but not very enlivening or comforting, must have appeared the toast lately said to have been proposed at a banquet given to a writer of comedies in honor of his latest work. A waggish guest rose to his feet and said:

"The author's very good health. May he live to be as old as his jokes."

This toast was given at a recent convivial gathering:

"The bench and the bar. If it were not for the bar, there would be little use for the bench."

As pithy and, if anything, still more to the point, was the following, given at a dinner of shoemakers:

"May we have all the women in the country to shoe, and all the men to boot."

These last expressions of sentiment must, we imagine, be after the style recommended by Charles Lamb when he gave some advice about speech-making to this effect:

"A speaker should not attempt to express too much, but should leave something to the imagination of his audience;" and he tells how, being called on to return thanks for a toast to his health, he rose, bowed to his audience, and said "Gentlemen," and then sat down, leaving it to their imagination to supply the rest.

If God has bestowed His gifts upon us in the greatest abundance, if He have filled our granaries with corn and multiplied our flocks in the fold, but has not enriched us with that fraternal affection wherewith we should support one another; if He has not given us a bountiful heart and a charitable hand to give some of our goods to the relief, and some of our bread to the nourishment of the poor—He hath given us but half a blessing. Wealth is but a confused lump till bounty shape and put it into form; but a dead useless piece of earth till charity animate and quicken, and by sending it abroad make it current, and by distributing it to several hands give it heat and motion.

It is not that the hypocrite despises a good character that he is not one himself, but because he thinks he can purchase it at a cheaper rate than the practice of it, and thus obtain all the applause of a good man, merely by pretending to be so.

Grains of Gold.

Never press a favor when it seems undesired.

Never talk or laugh aloud in public places or upon the street.

Silence is the understanding of the fools and one of the virtues of the wise.

What we call life is a journey to death, and what we call death is a passport to life.

Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help and what he cannot.

Perfect valor is to do unwitnessed what we should be capable of doing before all the world.

Whatever disgrace we have merited, it is almost always in our power to re-establish our reputation.

In vain we attempt to clear our conscience by affecting to compensate for fraud or cruelty by acts of strict religious homage towards God.

How different is the ready hand, tearful eye and soothing voice, from the ostentatious appearance which is called pity!

It is a higher exhibition of Christian manliness to be able to bear trouble than to get rid of it.

Never needlessly wound the vanity of another, or dilate unnecessarily upon disagreeable subjects.

Vanity is a strong temptation to lying: it makes people magnify their merit, overflourish their family, and tell strange stories of their interest and acquaintance.

Femininities.

Pride in beauty is like a flaw in a diamond.

Let your anger set with the sun but not rise with it.

One and one-third pints of powdered sugar weighs one pound.

One tablespoonful, well rounded, of soft butter weighs one ounce.

Mrs Lucy Welsh, of Illinois, is 95 and growing her third set of teeth.

Mme. Hess, of Paris, has refused $25,000 for her hair, which is six feet long.

There is in the heart of woman such a deep well of love that no age can freeze it.

There is only one blessing in this world that is better than a good husband, and that is a good wife.

Remember that you are married to a man, not to a god, and be prepared for imperfections.

The ladies in waiting to the Queen of Italy are declared to be the most beautiful in all Europe.

Mrs Sarah Rothschild, of Chicago, celebrated her 100th birthday by dancing a minuet the other day.

Don't be always teasing your husband for money, and keep the household expenses well within your allowance.

A double heart tied with a lover's knot is the decoration surmounting a heart-shaped mirror for the dressing table.

Two pigeons, with their beaks clinched and the bodies formed of garnet clusters, is a hairpin head of recent manufacture.

Nature, which has given us one organ for speaking, has given us two for hearing, that we may learn that it is better to hear than to speak.

A couple who have been "constant lovers for 40 years" were married the other day at Columbus, Ind. The groom is 57, and the bride 11 years younger.

In Russia the fan, bouquet and gloves of the bride are always provided by the bridegroom, and are carried to her on the eve of the wedding by the best man.

Something out of the common in breast pins is a knife-edge bar upon which are two diamond-studded kittens facing each other and playfully disporting with a pearl.

If when cabbages are being boiled a piece of stale bread wrapped in a clean rag be put into the water with them they will be less likely to send forth an unpleasant odor.

A London paper has received 27 000 letters on the question, "Is Marriage a Failure?" an issue, after all, which can be practically decided by two persons better than by a million.

True silence is the rest of the mind, and is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment. It is a great virtue; it covers folly, keeps secrets, avoids disputes, and prevents sin.

A Woman's League has been formed in New Orleans. One of its objects is to look in a large and practical way after the interests of women—as to how they are treated in asylums, prisons, stores, station houses, etc.

Miss Shadyside: "How bored that poor Mr. Jonesy looks with that frivolous young thing he is with. I can always tell when a gentleman is bored." Mr. Tiredtodeath, with a guilty start: "Bless my soul, you don't say so!"

Husband: "Do you believe in the theory that the greatness of a father often proves a stumbling block to the advancement of his son in life?" Wife: "I certainly do. I am thankful, John, that our boy will never be handicapped in that way."

A New Haven lady created considerable excitement at a store in that city by declaring that her baby had been stolen while she was trading. After search had been made everywhere some one suggested that she look at home. Sure enough the child was there.

When a woman has the gift of silence she possesses a quality above the vulgar: it is a gift Heaven seldom bestows; without a little miracle it cannot be accomplished; and nature suffers violence when Heaven puts a woman in the humor of observing silence.

"No," she sobbed, in the sanctity of her boudoir; "no, I can never marry a man whose monogram is printed in green, and who writes with purple ink. Oh, if he had only asked me to marry him, instead of writing to me, things would have been so different!"

Some ladies in Paris have formed a morning league. Its purpose is to reform the hours of social gathering, which are now detrimental to health. The members of the league suggest that all balls shall commence at 9 and end at midnight. Dinner parties are to be discouraged and luncheons to be given instead.

To get a ring, which has become tightly fixed, off the finger, soap a piece of common twine, and then wind it tightly and closely round the finger, beginning at the point and going on till the ring is reached. Force the end of the twine through the ring, unwind it, and the ring is almost sure to come off with it.

"You say Mr. Hankinson proposed to you last night, Irene? Why, I've had a standing offer from him for the last two years." "Likely enough, Laura. He didn't make me any standing offer, though. It was all he could do to get up off his knees when I refused him. He was in earnest this time, Laura."

On the honeymoon. Mr. Seabury: "Why that smile, sweetheart?" Mrs. Seabury. "I was just thinking of mamma's last admonition to be careful of alligators after we got here." Mr. Seabury: "Nonsense! We haven't seen one since we left her!" And the suspicion of an accent on the "her" marred what would have been a pleasant afternoon.

Masculinities.

Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise.

True and uniform politeness is the glory of any young man.

Of all the paths that lead to a woman's love, pity is the straightest.

Poverty is the only burden which grows heavier by being shared with those we love.

The average man can never understand why a watch always runs slow at church and fast at the theatre.

Do not make witticisms at the expense of others which you would not care to have made upon yourself.

Poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. It is hard for an empty bag to stand upright.

Do not expect too much from others, but forbear and forgive, as you desire forbearance and forgiveness yourself.

Among great composers, Auber died at 89; Cherubini, 82; Rossini, 77; Haydn, 77; Gluck, 73, and Meyerbeer, 72.

The unpardonable rudeness of ill-breeding under certain conditions becomes the glorious eccentricity of genius.

We may concede any man a right without doing any man a wrong, but we can favor no one without injuring some one.

The vain man idolizes his own person, and here he is wrong; but he cannot bear his own company, and here he is right.

Very unique is a silver sealing stand with quaint receptacles at each end for matches and a rustic bracket for holding the wax.

A Methodist minister in Tennessee once divided his discourse into three parts: First, will-ability; second, do-ability; third, stick-ability.

Titian is said to have been engaged in painting a picture, now in the academy at Venice, when he was cut off by the plague at 99 years of age.

If all fashionable people knew as much about history, geography and spelling as they do about horses and dogs it would be a very good thing.

Every one at the bottom of his heart cherishes vanity. Even the toad thinks himself good-looking—"rather tawny perhaps, but look at his eye!"

Young housewife, to husband who says he knows how to cook: "How long do you broil a chicken, Edwin?" Husband: "Oh—er—how long is the chicken?"

There is more jealousy between rival wits than rival beauties, for vanity has no sex. But in both cases there must be pretensions, or there will be no jealousy.

A unique pocket flask, having a covering of lizard skin, contains all the accessories of a picnic set, yet leaves generous accommodation for practical purposes.

In order to test the question of how many cigars a man ought to smoke in a day a Cincinnati man smoked 31. The question was settled. He has gone to an insane asylum.

At an auction in Cologne $1 600 was given for a little book containing a letter written by Christopher Columbus in Latin in the year 1493, consisting of only four leaves.

Be not too ready to pronounce that what you think a bad youth will necessarily become a bad man. Yonder sturdy oak may have grown from an acorn rejected by a hog!

Eben Harris, a bootblack of Port Jervis, has this inscription on his box: "No ungentlemanly, drunken or disorderly person's boots or shoes will be polished by the subscriber."

Bobby, interrupting his irritable grandfather, who is reading: "Grandpa!" Grandfather, irascibly: "Yes, yes; what is it?" Bobby: "Do you think I'll be as cross as you when I grow up?"

The wife of Senator Reagan is her husband's private secretary, and by virtue of the fact is entitled on all occasions to the privileges of the floor of the Senate, a right enjoyed by no other woman.

From a honeymoon diary: "Third day of our tour. I am very, very happy. Mr. Bowser has just aimed me on the chin, cheeks, nose, eyes and ears, and says he'd like to keep on kissing forever. He says he can hardly help biting me on the chin."

Last year there were 5315 divorces granted in France. The demands were largely made by the wives, and those who had been married from five to ten years were the most numerous in seeking release from matrimonial bonds. There were two divorces granted in the cases of couples who had celebrated their golden weddings.

The newest thing in wedding tours is called the "Secret Honeymoon," neither bride nor groom having any idea where they are going. The idea is not new. For years many young people have married without having any idea where they were going, or how they were to get there when they did know. They didn't have enough money to go to housekeeping.

Bulwer, the novelist, in the glow of youth, fell in love with a pretty face, and made what he supposed was a love match. He soon found that love's young dream was a hideous reality—that his hopes of married happiness had turned, like Dead Sea fruit, to ashes. The pretty bride became the domestic fury. A separation soon followed, but she never ceased to be a painful feature in his life.

A Ludlow, Mass., housewife, who dreamed that she put a tramp to flight with her son's shot-gun, the next morning resolved to see if she could manage the weapon in case she needed it. Accordingly she raised the gun and began fingering the trigger, when off went a heavy charge of shot, tearing a panel out of a door, riddling the jacket of the parlor stove and destroying two portraits on the wall.

Recent Book Issues.

Fowler & Wells, Publishers, New York, send us "Nervousness, its Causes, Symptoms and Treatment." By Dr. H. S. Dayton. Illustrated. Price twenty-five cents. Also, a very good poem, by W. Shaw, the Poet Hermit, entitled "Forward Forever", an answer to Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" Price twenty-five cents. It can be procured of Lippincott & Co.

Mrs. Emma D. E. N. Southworth's most popular copyright novel. "The Discarded Daughter," has just been issued by her publishers. T. B. Peterson & Brothers, Philadelphia, at the extraordinary low price of twenty five cents a copy, each, retail. "The Discarded Daughter" is an intensely exciting story and one of great interest, while the pictures of life in it are vivid and truthful. Its pages can be read and re-read with renewed pleasure.

"Masterpieces. Pope, Æsop, Milton, Coleridge, Goldsmith. With notes and illustrations. Edited by H. S. Drayton. 12mo.; fancy cloth. Price, $1.25. Fowler & Wells Co., 775 Broadway, New York." In offering this volume the publishers rightly claim that it is a combination of features that are novel and attractive. Every reader will thank the editor for Milton's "Comus"; a gem too much overlooked to-day. The other selections are Pope's "Essay on Man," the "Fables" of Æsop, "The Ancient Mariner" of Coleridge, "The Traveller," "The Deserted Village," and "The Hermit" of Goldsmith; all finely illustrated.

"Mosby's War Reminiscences, and Stuart's Cavalry Campaigns" is a volume by Colonel J. S. Mosby, the famous guerilla. It differs advantageously from a good deal of warlike literature, by being written in the form of a simple narrative, that reads like listening to a soldier speaking to a soldier. This original method enables the author to tell a great deal in a comparatively little space, and it is told with life and spirit. It may not do much towards making war history in the usual sense, but accepting it as true, it is certainly a very entertaining story of the prominent and strange part played by one of the late war's chief actors. Published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. For sale by Lippincott Company. Price $1 75.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

From Appleton & Co., Publishers, New York, we have received bound-volume thirty-three of *The Popular Science Monthly*, embracing the issues from May to October, of the year. This publication deservedly stands at the head of the leading popular scientific magazines of the world, and in its permanent shape makes a most valuable and welcome addition to any library.

The holiday number of the *Wide Awake* is rich with good things, and is as handsome as it is interesting. The next year of this juvenile will be even better than the last, if possible, so that the young people could hardly have a more entertaining companion than this monthly. Serials, by Trowbridge, by Margaret Sidney, by Susan Coolidge, by Charles R. Talbot, (all prime favorites with young readers, and old ones, too); short stories by Sidney Luska, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Grace Denio Litchfield, Noah Brooks and Margaret J. Preston; sketches and papers by Jessie Benton Fremont, Olive Risley Seward, Mrs Burton Harrison, General O. O. Howard, Elbridge S. Brooks, Sallie Joy White, Susan Coolidge, Andrew Lang, Amanda B. Harris, and Frances A. Humphrey; poems by Hjalmar H. Boyesen, Jean Ingelow, and Harriet Prescott Spofford—all these are promised. Published by D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.

The January number of *Lippincott's Magazine* begins with a complete novel, entitled "Hale Weston," by M. Elliott Seawell, a new Southern writer. It is an admirable picture of Virginia life before the war. R. H. Stoddard commences his promised series of literary reminiscences and criticisms with an article on Edgar Allan Poe, containing some fresh anecdotes and much entertaining matter. A very remarkable article by Charlotte Adams describes "Literary Society as She was Seen," and details how, in one of the leading literary houses in New York, she was exposed to absolute indignities from the literary ladies there assembled and narrowly escaped being robbed. A notable contribution is entitled "The Capture and Execution of John Brown," by an eye-witness, of a letter written on the spot by Parke Poindexter, who was one of the company engaged in the suppression of John Brown's outbreak. John Habberton's "At Last" shows the same delightful insight as ever into the minds and ways of children. The poetry and the departments are excellent as usual.

"I know a great, overgrown first-rate man in this place," writes a friend, "engaged in the mercantile business, who one morning with a pencil in his hand and a quill behind his ear, called out to his partner, 'Bill, what is John Stuplebean's first name?' And he never discovered his mistake until he began to write it, when he forgot his last name, and, with the same unconsciousness, sang out, 'Excuse me, Billy, but I've forgot John Stuplebean's last name now.'" The roar of laughter which ensued restored his memory.

Oh, if I only had her complexion! Why, it is easily obtained. Use Poxzoni's Complexion Powder.

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

SOME of my recollections were of the great amount of work done by the farmers' wives and daughters all the year through; for after the fall work was done, then the sewing and knitting all the stockings and mittens must be done, then the butter making, and nobody to help one, all must be done by the woman, and all hard work.

During the summer the year's supply of cheese must be made for the family, and often some to send to market, and how nice it was.

In the first place the leach tub must be set up some time previously, and often the housewife had to defer her plans until a convenient season for the men to find the time to do the job.

Then a great quantity of hot water must be applied to the ashes to extract the lye, and after waiting three or four days for it to commence to run, then the process now begins.

All the grease pots which had accumulated during the year were brought out, the big iron kettle was hung on the crane, and a hot fire started.

There was no rule nor receipt to go by, only guess work. Put in some grease and some lye; boil, then add some more until the kettle is nearly full; boil, then dip out a little to cool and then learn what is wanting.

Perhaps it is more lye, or water, or may be grease, and thus working over the fire all day, inhaling the perfumes of the boiling mass, when at last the compound is thought to be all right; but when after the standing over night it proved to be not of the right thickness, then it must be boiled over again the next day.

Then came the clearing up, which was no small job. A sufficient quantity was made to last through the year, for remember, no soap peddler came around, and there was no hard soap except, a little sometimes for the toilet.

Then there was another dreaded day when the butchering was done.

No meat carts to bring nice fresh meat to your doors, but enough meat must be preserved in some form, to last through the year! Sausage was made, and hams cured, a part stored away for the haying season, when four or five men were fed five times a day for as many weeks, for in those days men were up at five o'clock in the morning to whet the scythe, before the dew was off the grass.

At ten o'clock they all came in to lunch on coffee, doughnut, mince pie, etc., besides a something stronger was often taken to the hay field to keep their spirits up, then dinner at twelve o'clock, luncheon in the afternoon, and supper after the long day's work of fourteen or fifteen hours.

Cooking in those days meant hard work. Every Saturday, and often twice a week, the big brick oven was heated and filled with beans, Indian pudding, four or five loaves of brown bread, two or three kinds of pies, a pot of apple sauce with a bread crust over the top, called "pandandy," and very good eating it was.

All the other cooking was done at an open fireplace; an iron teakettle, a pot for potatoes, a larger one for boiled dinners, hung on a crane; a spider to fry the pork and sausage, a heavy iron bake-pan to set over the coals to bake biscuit with a lid to cover it; a large iron shovel to haul out the coals, and some one to stand over the coals to attend the cooking.

All the farm work was done by hand and only one ox was used, so that it was a long job, and often took weeks to finish, and during all that time the wife and mother was spending all her time cooking when she was not washing, ironing or mending for the family.

No hired girls to help as long as one could keep off the bed. Once or twice a year a woman came to help make the garments for the family and help get the children ready for school.

The making of candles was another hard and disagreeable job which had to be done every fall. Nothing but tallow candles and pine knots for lights, and a year's supply made at a time.

The tallow was melted and strained, then then the wicks were twisted on the sticks and these laid across two poles, which were suspended from the floor by resting on chairs.

The kettle of hot tallow was kept over the fire during the process of dipping, and from ten to twelve dozen can be made a day. The wicks were dipped into the hot tallow until they were of the right size, then taken from the sticks and trimmed all the same length, and packed in boxes for safe keeping. Then the next day came the clearing, and oh, dear, what a job!

What would the women of to day say if they had to work as their mothers did? No carpets on the floors, and the mopping and scrubbing that had to be done would certainly break the backs of some of our feeble sisters.

"AND SO," said he, bitterly, when he realised that she had rejected him—"and so you have been flirting heartlessly with me all the while. Well, I am thankful that I have found you out at last!" "Yes," she replied, "you have, and, what is more, I think you will always find me out hereafter when you call."

IT IS GOOD BUSINESS for every one having a Cold to treat it promptly and properly until it is gotten rid of—intelligent experience fortunately presenting in Dr. Jayne's Expectorant a curative thoroughly adapted to cure speedily all Coughs and Colds, and to allay any exciting inflammation of the Throat or Lungs.

A NEWSPAPER HOAX.—The editor of a western newspaper, suspecting his rival of stealing news from early copies of his paper, determined to lay a trap.

The chief reporter and the foreman printer were consulted, and a paragraph was put into type giving a short and startling account of a terrible murder committed at some distance from the town.

A dozen copies of the paper were printed before the stereotype plate containing this announcement was removed from the machine, and another plate with nothing but authentic news was substituted. Of these twelve copies with the fictitious narrative, one was placed in the way of a machine man who was believed to receive a dollar every morning for despatching an early paper to the office of the competing journal.

Next day the good people of the town were thrown into a fever of excitement by the appearance of bills, on which were printed, in dropsical black letters, "Terrible Tragedy! Mysterious Murder!" Thousands of papers were sold, and great was the joy of a certain party that the rival organ had not a single line about this important event.

But the joy was short-lived. The editor, whose subordinates had fallen headlong into the pit so cleverly dug for them, was aghast on discovering that the contents-bills of his contemporary made no reference to the supposed murder. He turned to the paper itself.

Not a word about the subject! The foreman was summoned in hot haste, and the paper from which the paragraph had been pilfered was produced.

There it was in black and white, identical in substance and almost in terms with the paragraph that was exciting the town and puzzling a couple of reporters who had been sent before sunrise to collect further particulars on that distant prairie. On the following day it was the turn of the other party to rejoice.

The hoax was explained, and though it did not cement a good feeling between the two newspaper offices, it taught one person, at least, to be very cautious about accepting early copies from a rival.

"MOTHER," said a little shaver the other day, "I know what I would do if I was at sea and the men were all starving, and they should draw lots to see who should be killed and eaten, and it should be me—I'd jump into the water."—"But," said the mother, "they would fish you up."—"No," said he, "for I wouldn't bite."

Wanamaker's.

PHILADELPHIA, December 24, 1888.

A DRESS PATTERN NEATLY BOXED COSTS YOU LESS than you'd be likely to get the goods separately for. And then the matching is perfect without a worry on your part. Sixteen prices. $3 to $16.75. Maybe five hundred styles and colorings.

Yard goods at 25, 37½, 50 and 75c, that you'll expect to pay more for.

WE PUBLISH THIS YEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME THE Season and Church Calendar. Four leaves of heavy cardboard with exquisite designs in color for Advent, Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. Complementary to the sketches are selected bits from Shakespeare, Milton, Longfellow, Gray, Mrs. Hemans, Spenser, Jean Ingelow, Whittier, Faber and other noble company. 30 cents; by mail, 35 cents.

The Thackeray Calendar. Live with Thackeray for a year. Shame wither under his satire; life brightens with his humor; the heart purifies with his sympathy. 50 cents; by mail, 56 cents.

The Dickens Calendar. Who but he could have supplied quotations for all the years we have made and sold his calendars. 50 cents; by mail, 56 cents.

No calendars less than published prices.

YOU CAN MEASURE ANY BOOK STOCK BY THE BOOKS in sets. As low as they come:

These in cloth, good type—
Scott, 12 vols., $5.
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Shakespeare, 6 vols., $4.
Emerson, 11 vols., $9 90.

These in half calf, good type—
Scott, 12 vols., $10.
Dickens, 15 vols., $13.50.
Thackeray, 10 vols., $9.
George Eliot, 6 vols., $5 40.
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December BOOK NEWS (112 pages, illustrated) will lift the covers of every Holiday Book and put you in the way of saving a dime or two or three on every dollar you put in them. 50c a year.

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Sore Throat, Colds, Coughs
Inflammation, Sciatica,
Lumbago, Rheumatism,
Neuralgia, Headache,
Toothache, Influenza,
Difficult Breathing,

CURED BY

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

In cases of LUMBAGO and RHEUMATISM, RADWAY'S READY RELIEF NEVER FAILS to give immediate ease.

The following was received by mail through W. H. Blyth, Druggist, Mt. Pleasant, Texas.

MR. W. H. BLYTH—Sir: "In compliance with your request to furnish you with the results of my knowledge and experience with Dr. Radway's R. R., in reply I can state that I have been using Radway's Remedies since 1852. I know the Ready Relief to be more reliable for Colds, Pleurisy, Pneumonia and diseases growing out of colds; for Cuts, Bruises, Sprains, Rheumatism and Aches, and pains generally, than any remedy I have ever known tried. From my personal knowledge of the Radway Remedies, I think them all superior to any remedies of which I have any knowledge, for all the ills for which they are recommended.

Respectfully,
T. H. SKIDMORE,
Pastor Green Hill Presbyterian Church.

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PAIN REMEDY

In the world, that instantly stops the most excruciating pains. It never fails in giving ease to the sufferer of pain from whatever cause arising; it is truly the great

CONQUEROR OF PAIN:

And has done more good than any known remedy. For headache (whether sick or nervous), toothache, neuralgia, rheumatism, lumbago, sprains, bruises, bites of insects, stiff neck, pains and weakness in the back, spine or kidneys, pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints and pains of all kinds, the application of Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure.

Inflammation of the Kidneys, Inflammation of the Bladder, Inflammation of Bowels, Congestion of the Lungs, Sore Throat, Difficult Breathing, Croup, Catarrh, Influenza, Headache, Toothache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Cold Chills, Ague Chills, Chilblains, Frost-bites.

The application of the Ready Relief to the part or parts where the difficulty or pain exists will afford ease and comfort.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency, and all internal pains.

Travelers should always carry a bottle of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

Fifty cents per bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS

The Great Liver Remedy.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse and strengthen. DR. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, loss of appetite, headache, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals, or deleterious drugs.

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Will be accomplished by taking Radway's Pills. By so doing

SICK HEADACHE

Dyspepsia, Foul Stomach, Biliousness, will be avoided, and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from diseases of the digestive organs: Constipation, inward piles, fulness of blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fulness or weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering of the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dimness of vision, dots or webs before the sight, fever and dull pain in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, chest, limbs, and sudden flashes of heat, burning in the flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

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DR. RADWAY'S PILLS are a cure for this complaint. They restore strength to the stomach, and enable it to perform its function. The symptoms of Dyspepsia disappear, and with them the liability of the system to contract diseases.

"Your Pills have done me more good (for Dyspepsia) than all the doctor's medicine that I have taken." ROBERT A. PAGE.
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BLANCHARD, MICH.

"For over three years I have been troubled with Dyspepsia, and found no relief until I used your Pills. They have cured me." THOMAS McCULLA.
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"Used to suffer greatly from biliousness and Sick Headache, until I tried your Pills. They are the best I ever tried." LOUIS COSTA.
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Send a letter stamp to DR. RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren street, New York. Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S, and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

THE UNRULY MEMBER.

"The boneless tongue, so small and weak,
Can crush and kill," declares the Greek.

"The tongue destroys a greater horde,"
The Turk asserts, "than does the sword."

The Persian proverb wisely saith,
"A lengthy tongue—an early death."

Or sometimes takes the form instead,
"Don't let your tongue cut off your head."

"The tongue can speak a word whose speed,"
Says the Chinese, "outstrips the steed."

While Arab sages this impart,
"The tongue's great storehouse is the heart."

From Hebrew wit the maxim sprung,
"Though feet should slip, ne'er let the tongue."

The sacred writer crowns the whole,
"Who keeps his tongue doth keep his soul."

—U. N. Nona.

A resort to extremes—Spanking.

A country seat—The top fence rail.

Horticulture for lovers — Raising two-lips.

An actor ought to be a happy man; his work is all play.

What is thieving in the outskirts?—Picking ladies' pockets.

The only persons who really enjoy bad health are the doctors.

In what place did the cock crow when all the world heard him?—In Noah's Ark.

Don't allow yourself to owe any man anything, even if it is only a grudge. Pay him.

Why is a man called honorable who is upstairs beating his wife? He is above doing a mean act.

"Never allow yourself to get out of anything," says a writer in a household journal. How about debt?

Bobby: "What did you say, pa?" Pa: "Never mind." Bobby: "I don't oftener than I have to, do I?"

Two heads are better than one, especially if a person is going to depend on a dime museum for a living.

Who are the best men to send to war? Lawyers; because their charges are so great no one can stand them.

If a church be on fire, why has the organ the smallest chance of escape?—Because the engine cannot play on it.

It is said of a great man, just dead, that he began life a barefooted boy. Come to think, we boys all began that way.

"So old Brown is dead, eh? Well, well! Did he leave anything?" "Yes. It broke his heart to do it, but he left everything."

A witness in a case of assault and battery, when asked what he said, replied: "I said to him, with the toe of my boot, 'Go home.'"

Civilization is making gratifying progress in the Congo country. A few years ago the inhabitants ate white persons raw; now they roast them.

Inspector of Schools: "Can any one tell me who Solomon was?" Small boy: "Solomon was a very wise and good man, who kept 300 porcupines."

"That boy of ours is getting to be a terrible story-teller," said Mr. Cherritry. "Yes," said his wife, "he tells fibs on the slightest provarication."

A Western village boasts of a woman who "goes out and chops wood with her husband." It is customary to use an axe, but he may be an unusually sharp man.

Of course it must be true, as Scripture says so, that the just shall inherit the earth; but we are likely to get tired out with waiting for the rest of the people to die.

"If you must kiss Mr. Peachblow, Olive, I wouldn't do so in view of the whole street." "I wasn't kissing Mr. Peachblow, ma. You wrong me; I was only looking to see if he needed a new collar button."

Wife: "You say you shot this duck yourself, John? I can find no marks on it." Husband, who hadn't thought of that: "Well—er—my dear, the bird was very high up, you know, and perhaps the fall killed it."

"Hello, there! What are you going into that saloon for?" "Only just to see a man about a little matter of business. Only going in for a second, you know." "Then you've had one already? Take my advice and don't take another."

Quills: "Do you know, Fanniman, that I sometimes think I am losing my mind." Fanniman: "Good gracious, Quills, you don't mean it! What put this idea into your head?" Quills: "The fact that I have begun to laugh at your jokes."

A lawyer had a quarrel with his wife last week, and it was nip-and-tuck between them. He told the most lies during the contest, but blistered his tongue in doing so, and while he was putting court plaster on it she talked him to death.

A judge charged a jury as follows: "Gentlemen of the jury, you must find that the defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. A reasonable doubt is such a doubt as will convince a reasonable man that the defendant is not guilty."

AND they do say that Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup is one remedy without a rival. Price 25 cts.

The great success of Salvation Oil provokes imitations. Get the genuine. Price 25 cts.

AT BIG PRICES.—In this age of many millionaires, rich men do not scruple to pay what seems to be almost exorbitant prices for articles which meet their seeming fancy.

A New York gentleman owns a piano which cost $46,000, and was built in London.

A lady in the same city has a string of pearls which is said to have cost $51,000, while another lady there wears a solitaire diamond ring valued at $48,000.

There is a sideboard in a mansion at Mauch Chunk, this State, which is called the most expensive in the country. It covers the whole side of a room, and it cost $47 000 to build it.

The costliest painting in America hangs in the Metropolitan Museum. It is called "1807," and was painted for A. T. Stewart by Meissonnier. When the Stewart gallery was sold, this picture was bought for $65,000 by Mr. Henry Hilton, who presented it to the Museum.

HORNE (to his friend at the concert, who is applauding enthusiastically)—"For goodness sake don't, man; that was abominable! You'll bring that wretched music butcher out again!" Bowie (with increasing enthusiasm)—"Good! Can't you see he's half fainting with exhaustion? I want some revenge, my boy."

SCHOOL Trustee (to the star boy of the class)—Could you forgive a boy who had insulted or struck you? Little Boy (after some thought)—Yes, sir, if he was bigger than me.

Catarrh Cured.

A clergyman, after years of suffering from that loathsome disease, Catarrh, and vainly trying every known remedy, at last found a recipe which completely cured and saved him from death. Any sufferer from this dreadful disease sending a self addressed stamped envelope to Prof. J. A. Lawrence, 68 Warren St., New York City, will receive the recipe free of charge.

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RUPTURE.—My son was ruptured; had worn trusses without benefit. I sent him to Dr. J. B. Mayer, 831 Arch St., Phila., and can safely say he is cured by his treatment. J. Yates, 424 Vine St., Phila.

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FOR 10 CENTS to pay postage, etc., we will send you by mail a **Box of Goods** that with 5 hours work a day you can make $21.00 a week. If you are out of employment or working hard for small pay, send for sample box and try it. If you are not satisfied or cannot sell the goods, return them by registered mail, and we will refund your money. Address HOWARD MFG. CO., 45 Eddy St., Providence, R. I.

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Fully EQUAL for Accuracy, Durability, Appearance and Service, to any $75.00 Watch.
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THE DOCTOR WHO GAVE ADVICE.

"O, ah, let me see, what do you give for a cold on the chest?" asked Jones, in a sort of indifferent tone, of a doctor with whom he was slightly acquainted, as he met him on the street. "Advice," was the laconic reply. So do we. We advise you not to neglect that hacking cough and drowsy feeling, the coated tongue, the failing appetite, the indigestion and general lassitude and debility—that "tired feeling," as so many express it. The blood is out of order, and neglect means consumption (scrofula of the lungs), and consumption is a short cut to the grave. Get the cure. It is Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. If taken in time, and given a fair trial, it will not disappoint. It is not only the most wonderful alterative, or blood-cleanser, known to medical science, but also possesses superior nutritive and tonic or strength-giving properties which assist the food to digest and become assimilated, thus building up both strength and flesh. For all cases of Chronic Catarrh in the Head, or for Bronchial, Throat and Lung Diseases, accompanied with lingering coughs, the "Golden Medical Discovery" is absolutely unequaled as a remedy.

For **Weak Lungs, Spitting of Blood, Short Breath, Consumptive Night-sweats,** and kindred affections, it surpasses all other medicines.

IT IS GUARANTEED to benefit or cure if taken in time and given a fair trial, in all diseases for which it is recommended, or the money paid for it will be returned.

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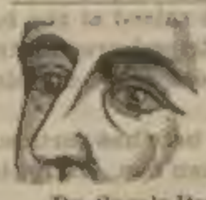

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SYMPTOMS OF CATARRH.—Headache, obstruction of nose, discharges falling into throat, sometimes profuse, watery, and acrid, at others, thick, tenacious, mucous, purulent, bloody, putrid and offensive; eyes weak, ringing in ears, deafness; offensive breath; smell and taste impaired, and general debility. Only a few of these symptoms likely to be present at once. Dr. Sage's Remedy cures the worst cases. Only 50 cents. Sold by druggists everywhere.

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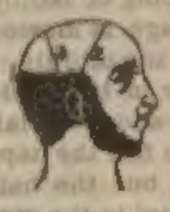

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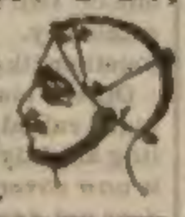

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FOR WIGS, INCHES.
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No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.
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No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
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This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also **Dollard's Regenerative Cream,** to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

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I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidity thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best Wash I have ever used.

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LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.

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4	Ella Rhee.	224	Come, Birdie, Come.
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7	Old Black Joe.	248	Birdie Darling.
8	Home, Sweet Home.	252	Darling Nelly Gray.
20	Who, Emma.	255	Little Brown Jug.
28	You'll Remember Me.	256	Erin is My Home.
29	No one to Love.	257	Kiss me Again.
32	Wearing of the Green.	260	Sweet Bunny South.
34	Cottage by the Sea.	316	They All Do It.
43	Poor Old Slave.	354	De Golden Wedding.
44	Blue-Eyed Nelly.	370	Old Kitchen Floor.
72	Faded Coat of Blue.	371	Sweet Bells Mahone.
77	My Old Kentucky Home.	376	Banner in the Air.
95	The Gipsy's Warning.	396	Pull Down the Blind.
98	Swinging in the Lane.	423	Ring My Mother Wore.
109	Kitty Wells.	472	Baby's Got a Tooth.
112	Old Man's Drunk Again.	537	Lottie Lee.
138	Kiss Behind the Door.	542	My Old Wife and I.
140	Mary of the Wild Moor.	552	Peek-a-Boo.
145	Mollie Darling.	623	Pretty Lips.
147	My Daughter Julia.	628	Call Me Back Again.
151	Driven from Home.	647	My Nelly's Blue Eyes.
173	The Slave's Dream.	655	Some Day.
181	Erin's Lovely Home.	659	Rock-a-Bye Baby.

We will send 10 of the above songs, your own selection, by mail, for 10 cents; 25 for 15 cents; the whole lot, 50 songs, for 25 cents; the Beautiful Song, **Ring My Mother Wore,** Words and Music, is alone worth more than we ask for the entire collection. Address

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Latest Fashion Phases.

There are many grades of fashion at the present moment, and, in one way or other, everything appears to be worn. Descriptions of dresses, mantles, and other articles of attire but rarely convey the actual garment to the mind's eye.

There are, as we all know, certain broad features which are written about, and laid down as a dominant rule of taste; but these, in a general way, the best dressed people mostly ignore. To be like every one else is what really fashionable women abjure, and the leading dressmakers invent styles which never come into the general market.

We are condemned to wear wool if we would follow *la mode*, and to secure a really stylish woolen gown, which is fit for full morning dress is not easy. A dove-colored serge-woven dress does, however fulfill these requirements.

It has an interwoven border quite twelve inches deep, of close-set threads of gold. This was draped over a velvet panel of a heavier or a much darker tone. The draperies were long, but the bordering was carried up the back, where the fulness of the skirt was fastened on to the bodice. This was made up with revers of the gold and a velvet waistcoat.

Red holds its own still, but this year it is fuller and brighter in tone.

A gown made up over silk of this new shade had an interwoven check. The skirt was made with a deep flounce, having narrow kiltings of the material at wide intervals and this is a novel and pretty feature. These same kiltings are unsecured, and flow outwards as the wearer moves. Some fall at the side, some in the centre of the back.

Over this there is a sort of redingote, caught up with black watered ribbon bows the sleeves of black velvet, black revers appearing on skirt and bodice. A black cloth, made up over black velvet had exactly down the centre of the skirt a panel half velvet half silk, of a bright moss green, the velvet the darker of the two.

There is no green anywhere else on the skirt, and it is just as if a black dress had suddenly opened to show a green one beneath. The bodice in front was entirely made of cross folds, broad and tapering to a point at the waist, outlined by a pointed black velvet band. The green appeared just at the throat in some three or four folds.

The soft woolens, with shawl borderings of handsome distinct patterns, but of cashmerienne colorings, are well worn.

One was a reddish brown, with large round-headed flowers for the border, put somewhat far apart. The fulness in the skirt was gauged at the sides of the waist, while most of the rest of the fulness seemed to be brought on to the bodice at the back. The bodice had one side velvet, one side of the material. The coat sleeves had two bands of the material stitched round. Selvedges are allowed to show and play their part in trimming, and the sleeves as often as not are rather dissimilar to the bodice.

Felt hats are most popular this winter, and a great many are copies of the summer straw ones, with prominent brim in front, and pinched up close to the crown at the back.

Red cloth Spanish hats, with a band of Astrakan or beaver just above brim, apparently supporting the folded and fanciful arranged cloth crowns are worn. A few large hats have the turned-up brim braided to match the costume.

Rather narrow, high crowned hats, are, however, the most universal, although a good many low flat crowned ones, with the trimming placed on, and partially over them, are to be seen.

Black Astrakan gloves, with leather palms and fingers are popular. They fit as well as kid ones, and are not unbecoming to the hand. They are most economical wear, for one pair will last almost, if not quite, the entire winter. They are also to be seen in tan shade, but not so neat looking.

A new glove is the Khadi deerskin, and seems to be much patronized. These gloves are in dust and tan shades, with six or eight buttons, and look particularly neat on the hand for either country or for travelling wear.

Kid is more in vogue for day wear at present, being warmer, but for the evening the latter holds its own, and so do the pale fawn gloves, which almost every toilette, except, perhaps, gray and white, when the gloves usually match.

Chatelaines are said to be coming in again, especially in steel and oxidised silver.

Bunches of old seals and beautiful watches of bygone date may be seen hanging from watered silk ribbon, with small buckles in the old fob style, with the Directoire and Regence gowns.

These fobs, as I may so call them, are now sold at the fashionable jewelers, with hook and swivel, the watered ribbon being about one inch wide and six inches in length.

If any one has large antique buttons they are affixed to the Directoire coats, and are star is sometimes worn on the left breast regarded as veritable treasures. A diamond attached to a smart little bow.

Fancy stationery is in great demand now, and the variety of designs is astonishing.

Among the more recent introductions is a black cat sitting upright on a piece of music, with "I am considering," inscribed above, a frog leaping into water and rushes, with the words, "In for it;" a red Mephistopheles surrounded by a few black clouds; with "Who——is this from" in small black letters this is the most costly in fancy designs.

Then the Wedgewood paper, with its delicate transparent white; the pale sea-green, gold-edged, with a spray of lilies of the valley reaching across the envelope flap and top of the notepaper; the delicate sky blue, with elongated spray of forget-me-nots; soft blush pink, with gold oats in the style, are all popular varieties, each kind having its own box with similar color and design on the top as if intended for a present.

There are also boxes containing paper and envelopes, with old coins of different sizes stamped on in gold, silver and bronze Square envelopes, invitation and visiting cards are much affected now, in large and small sizes.

The latest novelties are a white velvet or cloth bonnet, with a swallow on each side worked in jet, and one in the middle of the crown, in front three white palm leaves, and an aigrette of bird of paradise feathers; black velvet strings.

Blue or white velvet toque, Empire shape, turban border, and arranged with two jet clasps in form of diadem; in front a tuft of black feathers, with aigrette in the centre.

Very stylish toque in grenat velvet or any shade preferred, with folds in front, and the sides and outside trimmed with marabout boa, in shades of chinchilla gray—this boa falls at the back, and encircles the neck—a little steel comb placed on the velvet on one side.

Black velvet hat, with turned-up brim, Greek pattern in jet going round the crown, the middle made of puffed parrot-green velvet, with feathers of the same shade, a little green puffing inside, resting on the hair.

Gray felt hat, Directoire shape, the brim low in front, and much raised at the back, with a large bow of striped gray satin, in two shades; tuft of feathers, and long plume falling backwards.

The style of dressing hair has certainly a tendency to be lower than has lately been worn.

The way adopted by the most elegant women is to have the hair twisted round like a rope at the nape of the neck, with one or two curled ends escaping or falling carelessly. In front the fringe is massed together like a thick lock in the middle

Others plait the back hair in two wide plats, raised up with a comb and then falling slightly on the neck. In fact the nape is now covered and dressed, but the hair does not descend lower except in the case of curls being worn.

Odds and Ends.

IMITATION ORIENTAL WORK.

The rage for everything Oriental, which began a few years ago, instead of dying out, as some people prophesied would be the case, seems, if possible, greater than ever. Japanese screens and embroideries, Turkish rugs, Benares ware, and Indian and Chinese curiosities of all sorts meet the eye everywhere.

No room is now considered perfectly furnished without rugs. In the most artistic houses one sometimes sees floors of parqueterie with bright rugs, but this is hardly suitable to our climate.

It is therefore more usual to have art-colored felt or even a plain Brussels carpet plentifully covered with them; but real Oriental rugs, if good, are expensive, and consequently a plentiful supply of them is not within reach of all.

It may therefore be interesting to some of our readers to know that a great improvement has been made in the patterns for Smyrna wool rugs, which now can be had in really good Oriental designs, so that for a small outlay a home-made rug can be produced which has a very good effect in a room.

The canvas upon which these rugs are worked is now made in four different widths, eighteen, twenty-two, twenty-seven and thirty six inches wide.

Having procured sufficient of the above materials, and selected a pretty pattern, it is best to begin by cutting some of the wool in strands of equal lengths of about three inches (a post-card is a very good guide, if the wool is wrapped around the narrow way of the card, and cut twice); then each strand must be taken, doubled carefully in half, the looped end being carefully passed down through the canvas then up again, taking one stitch; the two ends are then passed through the loop, and tightly drawn, thus knotting the wool into the canvas. In doing this, an ivory crochet needle will be found a great assistance.

The pattern is copied in the same manner as the old-fashioned Berlin wool-work; for each stitch, knotting in a strand of wool in a corresponding color, and it is most interesting to watch the design gradually developing.

I find from experience that when working the rugs the canvas should lie flat upon the table, the selvedge towards the worker; and also that it is best to commence from the centre stitch of both pattern and canvas, afterwards working in straight rows.

The printed patterns as they are at present designed do not work out into very large rugs, but it is possible to increase the size by working extra borders.

A friend of mine who is very clever at all kinds of fancy work, has made quite a large rug by adding to one of these paper patterns several borders which she copied from an old Persian rug in her possession.

To do this she was obliged to increase the size of the foundation, which was easily done by placing one edge of the canvas about two inches over the other, and firmly attaching them by sewing every stitch with strong thread. If this is carefully done, the wool works just as well through the double canvas as the single.

Another way of making these Smyrna rugs is by working the foundation in plain knitting and introducing the strands of wool according to the pattern; they can be worked in either squares or stripe, and afterwards joined together, and workers who do not care to be troubled with any set pattern can make them entirely in one color. Rugs made with the strands of white wool look extremely well, and they resemble the goat skin rugs which were so popular a short time ago.

In brown and gray wool rugs are more useful, though less ornamental. I have also seen them made in mixed colors; and this is not a bad way to use up the various odds and ends of wool which may be left from former pieces of work. As they are soft and warm, they are most comfortable rugs to place by the side of a bed or in front of a dressing-table.

The kind of Turkish embroidery which one sees frequently in the form of table-covers is not at all difficult to imitate, especially if one has a piece of the real work from which to take a few ideas.

I recently saw a small chair covered with this imitation Turkish work. It was made of black cloth, with medalions of different color cloths "appliqued," and on each medallion there were Eastern designs and hieroglyphics (said to be verses from the Koran) worked in chain-stitch in many colored silks, and the black cloth foundation between the pieces of colored cloth was also covered with devices, stars and crescents, scrolls and flourishes of every description, all worked in chain-stitch with bright-colored silks. The designs on the medallions should be worked before they are attached, but those on the foundation must be lightly sketched in white chalk before working them.

This kind of embroidery looks well on almost any background, white cloth being especially effective, but naturally rather delicate, a foundation of black cloth has the advantage of being very serviceable, and as the work is strong and cleans well, it is suitable for mantel borders or brackets for a library, dining-room, or smoking-room.

The same style of designs worked in chain-stitch in colored silks upon small squares of fine Indian muslin, make very pretty dessert d'oyleys, and I have also seen them used as ornamental coverings for toilet pin-cushions.

TRUTH, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of knowledge, and the business of the understanding; whatever is beside that, however authorized by consent, or recommended by rarity, is nothing but ignorance or something worse.

Confidential Correspondents.

Y. J.—We know nothing of the firm you mention.

EXTRA.—When writing to a lady, whether married or single, begin your letter "Dear Madam."

GROSVENOR.—It does not necessarily follow that removal of cataract from one eye will impair the vision of the other. Indeed, the experience of oculists is to the contrary.

SESQUIALTERA.—The host at a dinner party should treat all his guests with impartial courtesy; it is very ill-bred to pay exclusive attention to a member of his own family when visitors are present.

LEXICON.—The word "oecumenical" means general, universal; and accordingly an Oecumenical Council is a general assembly of the whole of the Roman Catholic Church, as represented by it's bishops.

ROSE L.—It would be impossible for us to say whether your voice be worth cultivating without having heard it. The only thing we can recommend you is, that you should get some singing-master in your own town to try your voice and give you an opinion.

A. N. E.—Iphigenia was a daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, who was decreed to be sacrificed to Diana at the time of the Trojan war, to expiate her father's offence in killing her favorite stag; but the goddess took compassion on her. The story is too long to repeat here.

LOUIS H.—The process of making the article you mention is patented we believe. It is a kind of oil cloth, made by mixing ground cork, ground leather, paint, oil etc., and then subjecting the mass to such pressure as will force it into various shapes and patterns. It can be had in any of the leading stores—tho' we do not know the exact place of its manufacture.

PUZZLED.—You are rather mixing up the two nations; the Chinese and the Japanese have very little in common. The practice of distorting the feet to make them small is confined to China; the Japanese are more practical, and do not do such ridiculous things. The better classes in Japan are refined and intelligent; they hold politeness to be the first of all earthly virtues.

FLORET.—The prefix "in" is Latin, the prefix "un" English, and their use is ambiguous. Both, however, are employed in a negative or privative sense. The general rule is that the particle "un" should, when possible, be limited to words of English derivation; but in "unfortunate" we have an accepted and striking exception. A century ago it was "infortunate." "Infortunate" and "unfortunate," of course, mean the same, but the former is now obsolete.

AGNES T.—We presume you allude to the optical delusion called "phantom thumbs." If so this is the modus operandi; if any one looks steadily at a patch of moderately bright light on a wall and then gradually raises his hands, having the fingers shut, the palms directed forward, and the two thumbs touching at their tips, he will at the moment the thumbs reach the level of the eye see three thumbs instead of two. The eyes should be directed steadily at the wall all the time, and not attempt to look at the thumbs. Some persons see the illusion best when the thumbs are within a few inches of the eye, and others do so when they are held away at arm's length. Curious effects are produced by slowly separating the thumbs as they reach the eye level, and also by substituting fingers for thumbs.

SYLVIA.—You are both of you too young—far too young—to think of marriage. At your ages you cannot possibly know your own minds, nor what real, earnest love is. Your sweetheart should be at least five or six years your senior, and not a boy in his teens, who may probably in a few years totally change his ideas, and, when he does get fixed notions and a settled purpose in life, very likely find that he has made a terrible mistake, which, if you marry him while his present fever lasts, will then be irrevocable, and a sorry day for you will be the awakening. You, too, can well afford to wait. You are just of that romantic age when impressions are easily made, and as easily effaced. Your other affair, the existence of which proves how little you know of yourself and of the world, we look upon as infatuation, which can only end in the total loss of your future peace of mind. Give up all thoughts of lovers and matrimony till you have a little more experience.

KISMET.—We have changed your signature for what we think good reasons. Your husband evidently loves you, but we are afraid you expect from him the intense devotion of his lover days. This is not natural, and it is not fair in you to require it. Do not for the sake of your future happiness think of leaving him. Should you do so, we fear that with your way of looking at matters, the end would be something dreadful to contemplate. No one has unalloyed happiness in this world, but you, in our judgment have more to be proud of and thankful for than two-thirds of those who are married. Your mother tells you everything will no doubt come right. If there is trouble that you cannot positively settle between yourself and God, go to her. Nobody on earth can love you better—if she is like most mothers and we think she is—and she will give you good advice. "Kismet" in a general way means whatever happens, is not simply known and indirectly permitted, but foreordained, by God.

AUSTIN AND NEVADA.—You should understand that the most to be justly claimed for telling character by handwriting is that the chances of hitting the mark are somewhat better than of missing it. It cannot in any case be relied upon as a certain indication, but generally speaking, may contribute along with such tests as a person's manner of walking, laughing, etc. to prove particular traits. This is all there is in it. Judging therefore of "Nevada's" character from the hand, we should say she is gentle in her manners, young, pretty and possessed of good taste. She is business-like in her methods. We cannot detect any weak sign in the evidence of her writing unless it may be she is too gentle and confiding. Altogether the character is truly feminine and womanly in the best sense of the word. "Austin's" education and general habits are in nowise as good or strong as "Nevada's." The hand indicates carelessness in habits, and changeability. There is also a slowness about it that is marked. Altogether we would say that "Austin" is a person of moderate abilities, good-natured, affectionate and trustworthy. The fickleness we speak of would appear in worldly matters rather than in affairs of the heart. Let us know if the guess is near the truth in both cases.